others mocked and said, 'Speak to God, and we shall hear if he will answer. You have no God, otherwise he should not have permitted you to fall into our hands. Where is now thy God? Call upon him, and he will help thee. See, we can do with you just what we like—hang you, or drown you, or beat you to death; who will hinder us?' I replied, 'What good can it do you, although you should kill me? I am quite innocent, have done nothing to deserve death at your hands, and were you to kill me you must be answerable to God for my life. My people are also innocent; they have done you no injury. You yourselves hewed down the crucifixes, and threw out the pictures.' 'And you,' they retorted, 'deserve to be hanged upon a cross.' We were nearing the Vistula, the waggon was drawn up, and they accompanied me on foot towards the river. We had already come so near that we could see the ice. They halted, and the leader asked, 'How much will you give us if we let you go? For a hundred roubles we will set you free.' The others said, 'Lay him down rather, and we will give him a hundred blows.' I replied that I had no money to give, but that I wished with all my heart that they might be led to believe in Jesus, and so become children of God, and escape everlasting condemnation. 'Do you think, then, we shall be lost, and that you only will be saved?' '"Except ye repent and believe on the Lord Jesus, ye cannot be saved," so it is written.' 'Go, go, you are a stupid man. How can you know who shall be saved or lost? You would perhaps also return here if we spared your life this time?' 'To be sure; I must return to visit our members, and in order that others may be converted.' 'You don't convert the people, you only mislead them.' 'I do not lead anybody to lie, steal, or do injury to their fellow-creatures; on the contrary, that they should love and pray for all men.' 'Do you pray, then, for us?' 'To be sure, also for you.' 'Why don't you pray, then, that we may gain the victory over the Russians?' 'Turn to God first, and with his help you shall gain all, and heaven also, the true fatherland.' I was then cast into a dungeon, and after an hour two of them returned, wrenched the lock with force, and let me out. Two brethren had come after me; they had begged for my life, and given twenty-one roubles as a ransom. In the morning, when the others came and wished to know where I was, these two said that the Baptists had come and stolen me away in the night whilst they slept: 'See, the lock has been broken up.'

"Dear brother, all this I have recently undergone. You and all believers must feel how necessary it is to pray for Poland at this time. Lately, I baptized in Ricini nineteen other souls, and about ten more are ready to be baptized. Our meetings are so largely attended that we can hardly find room for all who come. We must really try to build a house, but the poverty is so great I know not where the money is to come from.

"I am, your brother in the Lord,

"G. F. Alf."

DOMESTIC.

Blenheim Chapel, Leeds.—On Friday, March 25, services in connection with the opening of this chapel were held, and attracted numerous gatherings of friends from the neighbourhood. The new buildings consist of a chapel capable of accommodating 600 persons, a school-room in the rear 53 feet by 30 feet, a lecture-room, infants' class-room, and three other class-rooms beneath the school-room, vestries, a tea-room, and various other apartments and conveniences. The site is a commanding one, occupying a prominent angle at the corner of Blackman Lane, in Woodhouse Lane. At present the front of the building is set back considerably from Woodhouse Lane, but it is contemplated eventually to bring it forward about 15 feet. The existing building is, therefore, shortened in its intended proportions, and will, doubtless, present a very handsome appearance when extended. The extension of the chapel will increase the accommodation to upwards of 900 persons. The sermon on the Friday morning, by the Rev. H. S. Brown, of Liverpool, was preached to a crowded audience. A little before one o'clock about eighty ladies and gentlemen partook of a cold collation provided in the school-room. In addition to some of the gentlemen present at the sermon, were the Revs. H. S. Brown, W. Thomas, Dr. Crofts, R. Horsfield, &c. After ample justice had been done to the repast, the pastor, the Rev. Dr. Brewer, gave a short address, and called upon Mr. Arton Binns, the chairman of the building committee, to submit a statement of its proceedings. The total cost of the land, buildings, and furniture is little over £5,100, towards which about £4,500 is already paid or promised, leaving a balance of about £600 to be raised at the opening services and at a bazaar. Speeches were afterwards made by Mr. James Holroyd, Mr. Paull (architect), Mr. Thomas, Dr. Crofts, and Mr. Brown. At five o'clock, a very numerous company partook of tea. After introductory remarks by the chairman (Rev. Dr. Brewer), the Rev. J. Makepeace gave an address on "The Church of Christ in relation to individual effort;" and the Rev. W. Best, B.A., on "The Church of Christ in relation to the world." The opening services were continued on the following Sunday by the Rev. J. P. Chown preaching to crowded congregations; during the Easter week a bazaar was held in the school-rooms, which realised about £250; and on the Sunday following (April 3rd), the Rev. S. G. Green, B.A., President of Rawdon College, preached in the morning; and in the afternoon addressed the scholars of

the several Baptist schools in the town, when the chapel presented a dense mass of juvenile auditors that must have greatly cheered the preacher's heart. The interesting services were brought to a conclusion by a united communion service, presided over by the Rev. Dr. Acworth, at the close of which a collection was made on behalf of the widows and orphans of our Baptist missionaries. The sum realised by these several services, inclusive of that collected at the bazaar and the amount realised at the communion service, was about £370—thus leaving between £200 and £300 still to be raised.

South Parade Chapel, Leeds.—This building, which has been closed since the 1st of February, was again used for Divine service on Sunday, April 10th, when sermons were preached, in the morning by the Rev. J. Makepeace, of Bradford, and in the evening by the Rev. R. N. Young (Wesleyan), to large congregations. The alterations made include the re-pewing of the body of the chapel, a better system of lighting, the erection of a new organ, the improvement of the Sunday-school accommodation, and general decoration of the interior and painting of the exterior. The works have been executed under the superintendence of Mr. W. Hill, architect, of Albion Street, at a total cost of £1,100. To meet this the friends connected with the place have subscribed £847, and the sale of the small organ previously used and of the pewing, &c., has realised £79; leaving about £175 to be met by the opening services and further contributions. On Tuesday evening, April 12th, the new organ was formally opened, when Mr. Wm. Holt, of Leeds, the builder, presided at the instrument, and displayed its powers to great advantage. The selection of music included many favourite pieces, and was exceedingly well received. The services were continued on the following Thursday evening, when the Rev. W. Landels, of London, preached an able sermon: and on Sunday, April 17th, when sermons were preached by the Revs. W. Best, B.A. (pastor), and E. R. Conder, M.A. On Thursday evening, the 21st April, a public tea meeting was held in the school-room, when about 300 sat down to tea. A crowded meeting, presided over by the Rev. W. Best, B.A., was afterwards addressed by the Rev. J. P. Chown (who presented the pastor with a handsome pulpit bible and hymn-book, as a mark of affection and esteem from the young people), Revs. Dr. Brewer, J. Tunnicliff, J. Compston (Barnsley), &c. In the course of the evening, a statement was read showing a balance of about £112 remaining against the treasurer. A further subscription was immediately commenced in the room. In a very short time the chairman was enabled to announce, amidst much cheering, that over £100 had been promised.

Shirley, Hants.—On Tuesday evening, March 29th, a most interesting service was held in the Baptist chapel, Shirley, to celebrate the completion of a new school-room. This room has been erected at the back of the chapel, and is very spacious and commodious, being 30ft. by 30ft. 6in., and 14ft. in height, with open roof. There is in this nothing remarkable; but the feature which calls for special observation is the mode by which the work was done. It is a fact that every brick in that building was laid, every piece of timber squared and fitted, and every nail driven, by the freely-given labour of the handicraftsmen forming part of the church and congregation. They felt the want, and they set their hands to the work, and being unable to contribute to the payment of skilled workmen, they did contribute that which they had it in their power to give,—their own time and energy and skill. After the labours of the day were over, denying themselves the rest which they often sorely needed, they repaired to the work to which they had consecrated themselves, and far into the night might be heard the sound of axe and hammer, trowel and plane, as slowly but surely the walls were being reared. And now the work is done from roof to foundation, the building is complete, and the members who filled that room on March 29th, and sat down to a comfortable tea, could well appreciate the amount of self-denying labour which had been bestowed upon it. A meeting was held in the chapel after the tea, presided over by the Hon. James Price, of Yewberry House, and there were also present the Revs. R. Caven and J. Collins, of Southampton, J. R. Burt, of Beaulieu, J. Walters, of Freemantle, and Dr. Perrey, the pastor of the church. After a short address from the chairman, upon the necessity and benefits of religious education, the treasurer presented his report, from which it appeared that £97 3*s.* 7*d.* had been raised, and £101 17*s.* 1*d.* expended for materials, leaving a balance of £4 13*s.* 6*d.* due to the treasurer, and about £10 5*s.* outstanding bills, and further necessary outlay, being altogether £15, which he hoped would be raised by that meeting. The meeting was brought to a conclusion shortly after nine o'clock. We are happy to say that almost all the money needed was raised at the meeting.

NORLAND, NEAR HALIFAX.—On Friday, March 25th, a Baptist church was formed at this place. The circumstances connected with the rise of the new interest were somewhat unusual. The persons now constituting the Baptist church had for some time been in communion with a Reform Methodist Church in the neighbourhood, but recently, rigid terms of subscription having been presented as the ground of future fellowship, secession was determined upon. An upper room was furnished as the place of meeting *pro tem.*, and opened for Divine service about twelve months since by Mr. John Clay, a member of the First Baptist church, Halifax. At this time the question of Christian baptism engaged the attention of the new congregation, two of whom were already baptized. The result of inquiry and deliberation was that the remainder decided for baptism, and applied to the Rev. Thomas Michael, of Halifax, who accordingly immersed them on the 25th of February, at Pellon Lane chapel, in the presence of a large congregation. On Friday, the 25th of March, the following services were held by the Revs. T. Michael, of Halifax, and J. Green, of Hebden Bridge. In the morning, Mr. Green discoursed on the nature and objects of a Christian church, and Mr. Michael on the offices of a bishop and deacons; after which a statement of doctrine, in the words of Scripture, was read as that which the people generally maintained; and, on this basis, Mr. Michael formed them into a church. Subsequently to this ceremony deacons were elected, and the morning service concluded with the celebration of the Lord's Supper; many friends from Halifax and Hebden Bridge communing with the infant church. An early tea having been provided, a crowded evening meeting was held, the Rev. T. Michael taking the chair; Messrs. S. Fawcett, J. Clay, Ostler, and Magson, of Halifax; Rev. J. Green and Mr. William Clay, of Hebden Bridge, and other friends, addressing the assembly on the relations of church and congregation. These proceedings excited great interest, and attracted a large number of friends from Halifax and other places.

UPTON CHAPEL, LAMBETH ROAD, LONDON.—The public opening of Upton Chapel, erected in the Lambeth Road for the Baptist congregation formerly meeting in Church Street, Blackfriars Road, and called after the Rev. James Upton, who was during forty-eight years the pastor of the church, took place on Tuesday, March 22nd. In the morning the Rev. William Brock preached to a numerous audience. A company of more than 200 ladies and gentlemen afterwards dined in the large hall of Taylor's Repository, Elephant and Castle, the arrangements having been superintended by Mr. T. Phillips, a deacon of the Metropolitan Tabernacle. The chair was taken by Edward B. Underhill, Esq. The toast of "The Queen" having been fully honoured, the sentiments, "Prosperity to the Pastor, Deacons, and Church of Upton Chapel," and "Long Life to the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, and Success to his College," became the subject of appropriate speeches. The interesting incident occurred of the presentation to the architect, Mr. J. E. Goodchild, by the Rev. G. D. Evans (pastor), of the English Hexapla, containing a suitable inscription on the fly-leaf. Thanks were cordially voted to Mr. Underhill, as chairman, and were acknowledged. The school-room of the new chapel was immediately after filled by a large tea-party, and at seven o'clock the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon preached to a congregation that crowded the edifice to the doors. The opening services were continued on the following Sunday. Upton Chapel, which faces Bethlehem Hospital, is a very handsome building, seating 732 persons, exclusive of children's gallery. There are connected with it a school-room for 500 children; minister's, deacons', and chapel vestries; a suite of rooms for chapel-keeper; three class-rooms and kitchen; besides minister's residence, with a large plot of garden-ground in the rear. The cost has not, we believe, exceeded £6,600.

LYDBROOK, GLOUCESTERSHIRE. — On Friday, March 25th, the foundation-stone of a new Baptist chapel was laid here by Dr. Batten, of Coleford. The day being so fine and so warm in this lovely valley of the Wye, a great number of persons assembled on the lofty hills and eminences around to witness the scene. The proceedings commenced at three o'clock, when Mr. Watkinson, the pastor, gave out the opening hymn, and the Rev. M. S. Ridley engaged in prayer. Then Dr. Batten laid the stone, and on it he stood and addressed the auditory with a few suitable preliminary remarks; and from the same stone the Rev. J. E. Cracknell, Cheltenham (successor to the late Rev. J. Smith), gave an excellent address, after which he closed with singing and prayer. Several sums having been laid upon the stone, the friends met to the number of 321 to tea in the assembly-room at the Anchor Inn. After tea, they reassembled and filled the spacious room, when Dr. Batten took the chair. After singing and prayer, the chairman called upon Mr. Watkinson to read the report, which included several items, such as buying

the old chapel for £108, the beautiful site for the new chapel and land for cemetery (which is enrolled for the Baptist denomination) for £80, and included funds of the day for upwards of £80. Two friends had also promised £50 towards the debt. The report having been read, excellent addresses were delivered by the Revs. P. Press, Cinderford; M. S. Ridley, Lydney; W. Nicholson, Parkend; J. E. Cracknell, Cheltenham; and by Messrs. W. Rhodes, Cinderford, and C. Roberts, Ross. Mr. Tyndall, of Woodside (after thanks being recorded to Dr. Batten, Mr. Rudge, Mr. Hancorn, and the ladies), concluded the meeting with prayer.

HIGHGATE, MIDDLESEX.—On Thursday, April 7th, some interesting services were held at the Baptist chapel, Highgate, in connection with the settlement of the Rev. John H. Barnard, of the Metropolitan Tabernacle College. In the morning, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon preached to a crowded audience from Ezekiel xxxvi. 9, and in the afternoon addressed the friends assembled for dinner at the Highgate Working Men's Institute. At the recognition service, held in the chapel at six o'clock, the Rev. J. Corbin, of Hornsey, made the usual inquiries of the church and pastor respectively as to the reasons which had led to their present connection. Thomas Bousfield, Esq. (one of the deacons), replied on behalf of the church, and then the Rev. J. H. Barnard gave a simple and affecting account of the steps by which he had been led to personal dedication to the Gospel work, to the Metropolitan Tabernacle College, and eventually to Highgate. The Rev. George Rogers addressed some admirable counsels to the pastor, and the Rev. Josiah Viney offered some excellent and judicious advice to the church. The other parts of the service were conducted by the Rev. Samuel Manning, the Rev. S. S. Hatch (the former pastor of the church), Mr. Gracey, and the Rev. William Brock, jun. The services were well attended, and were to be followed during the ensuing week by meetings for special prayer.

GOODSHAW, LANCASHIRE.—Services in connection with the laying of the foundation-stone of a new Baptist chapel in this place were held on Friday, March 25th. In the afternoon a large concourse of persons assembled, when the stone was laid by H. Kelsall, Esq., of Rochdale, to whom a silver trowel was presented. The Rev. J. Jefferson, of Southport (formerly minister in the old chapel), offered the dedicatory prayer; after which the Rev. B. Evans, D.D., of Scarborough, delivered an interesting and appropriate address. Tea was provided in the Assembly-room, Crawshaw-booth, and in the evening a public meeting was held in this place, presided over by L. Whitaker, jun., Esq., of Haslingden, and addressed by the Revs. B. Evans; D.D., J. Jefferson; C. Williams, Accrington; R. Evans and J. Stroyan, Burnley; P. Prout and W. J. Stuart, Haslingden. The chapel is to accommodate 750 persons, and will have side and end galleries. The style is Lombardo-Italian, treated in a distinctive manner, expressive of the purposes of the structure, and suited to the free and open situation it will occupy. The cost, exclusive of land, heating, architects' commission, &c., will be about £2,200. Considerable interest was felt in the services, and at the close it was announced that about £160 had been added to the building fund by the day's proceedings.

BETHEL CHAPEL, CARDIFF.—The friends of the above chapel held a tea-meeting on Easter Monday for the purpose of opening a new harmonium and of getting rid of the remainder of a floating debt on the premises. Some 300 to 400 friends sat down to tea in the school-room, which was decorated for the occasion. At the public meeting held in the chapel the chair was occupied by J. E. Billups, Esq. Mr. G. L. Stowe, one of the deacons, made a financial statement, from which it appeared that the chapel and premises were built about five years ago at a cost of £3,600, towards which £1,100 had been received from the sale of the old chapel; donations, collections, &c., £2,090; total, £3,190, leaving a debt upon the minister's house of £300; and a sum of £110 due to the Baptist Building Fund in London. Addresses were then delivered by the Rev. J. Bailey, on "Congregational worship," and by the Rev. N. Thomas, on the "Present claims of Cardiff on the exercise of godly zeal." The Rev. G. Howe, pastor, made some pleasing remarks on the kindness and hospitality of Christian friends who had contributed to the funds of the chapel. The meeting, which was of a pleasing, profitable character, concluded about ten o'clock.

STAFFORD.—The foundation-stone of a new Baptist chapel in this town was laid on Easter Monday. At half-past ten the ceremony was commenced by the Rev. W. H. Cornish, the pastor of the church. The Rev. W. Jackson, of Bilston, read the 84th Psalm, and conducted the devotional part of the services; after which J. H. Hopkins, Esq., of Birmingham, adjusted the stone into its proper place, and delivered a very interesting and appropriate address. The Rev. S. B. Brown,

B.A., of Salford, and Mr. J. Brown, the senior deacon, also delivered congratulatory addresses. The Doxology was then sung; and the friends retired to the school-room, in which luncheon had been provided; after which Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Brown again addressed the meeting. At five o'clock the tables were spread for tea. The room was soon crowded in every part. After tea Mr. J. Brown was called on to preside. Valuable and interesting addresses were delivered by the Revs. G. W. White (Wesleyan New Connexion); — Davis, of Smethwick (Independent); W. Jackson, of Bilston; W. H. Cornish; and Messrs. Rudge, E. Lovett, and J. T. Evans.

CORTON, WILTS.—The annual meeting of the Baptist church and congregation here, held every Good-Friday, was more than usually interesting this year, in consequence of its being made the occasion of the re-opening of the chapel on the completion of internal alterations and repairs. In the afternoon a sermon was preached by the Rev. J. Penny, of Clifton; and in the evening, after tea, a public meeting was held. The chapel was well filled on each occasion. The chair at the evening meeting was occupied by Mr. T. Hardwick, of Warminster; and addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. Penny and W. C. Jones; and by Messrs. J. V. Toone, the pastor of the church, Hardwick, Stent, and Llewellyn, of Warminster. From the financial statement made by Mr. Toone, it appeared that the total expenditure had amounted to about £73, of which, through the kind assistance of friends in the neighbouring towns and the efforts of the congregation, only some £13 remained unpaid. The chapel is considerably improved both as to appearance and comfort.

RAWDON COLLEGE, NEAR LEEDS.—The vacant Classical and Mathematical tutorship in this institution has been filled up by the appointment of the Rev. William Skae, M.A., of Edinburgh. Mr. Skae has long been honourably known in that city as a most accomplished scholar and a highly successful teacher; as well as an occasional preacher in connection with the Scottish Congregational body. For some years past, as we understand, his studies have been much directed to the points in dispute between the Baptists and Pædobaptists, and the result has been his deliberate adoption of Baptist principles. He has therefore been baptized by the Rev. Jonathan Watson, and, as above stated, is about to enter into official connection with our denomination in England. Mr. Skae has, we believe, become very favourably known to some of our best scholars by his contributions to "The Scottish Educational Journal," "The Journal of Sacred Literature," and to the new edition of Kitto's Biblical Cyclopædia.

DISS, NORFOLK.—The twenty-sixth anniversary of the Baptist Sabbath school, and also of the settlement of the Rev. J. P. Lewis as pastor of the church, took place at Diss, on Friday, March 25th. A very large number assembled in the spacious school-rooms to tea; in fact, more than could be seated at first. The room was decorated in the most elegant manner with banners and devices, the handiwork of the pastor's wife and daughters. After tea a public meeting was held in the new chapel (now happily free from debt), when the interest of a large audience was sustained by addresses characterised by great earnestness and power, on "Sabbath school work and the workers;" "The social element of religious life;" and "The great ecclesiastical questions of the day," by the Revs. F. Basden, J. T. Wigner, J. Warren, G. Gould, and others. The pastor occupied the chair, and the meeting was one of deep interest and enjoyment.

BATH STREET, GLASGOW.—The annual *soirée* of this church was held on Tuesday, April 12th, in the Scottish Exhibition Rooms. Mr. Boulding, the pastor, occupied the chair, and was supported by the Rev. Messrs. Alex. Macleod, Medhurst, Glover, Field, Dr. H. Sinclair Patterson, Dr. James Paterson, H. Batchelor, and several office-bearers of the church. After tea, the chairman gave a short sketch of the progress of the church from its formation two years ago. What had been done, however, he looked upon as only indications of greater things to be accomplished. In the course of the evening one of the office-bearers presented Mr. Boulding with "Dr. Smith's Dictionary of the Bible," in three large volumes, together with a purse of sovereigns. One of the volumes bore the following inscription:—"Presented to the Rev. J. W. Boulding by members of the Bath Street Baptist church and congregation, Glasgow, as a token of respect and appreciation of his ministry."

HARBORNE, NEAR BIRMINGHAM.—The want of proper chapel and school accommodation has long been felt by the Baptist friends in this populous and rising suburb, and on Easter Monday the foundation-stone of a new school-room was laid by Mr. John Phillips, an old and respected superintendent of the school. The Revs. Thomas M'Lean (pastor of the church), C. Vince, and J. J. Brown, took part in the service. Although the weather was most unpropitious there was a fair attendance.

At five o'clock a public tea was held in the old chapel, which was crowded. After tea the meeting was addressed by the Revs. Thomas M'Lean, W. L. Giles, C. Vince, J. J. Brown, and others. The choir performed several appropriate pieces of music. There were some additional sums promised to the building fund, which has already reached to half the contemplated outlay; and altogether the day's proceedings were most encouraging.

Houghton Regis, Beds.—The new Baptist chapel at Houghton Regis was opened on Thursday, April 7th. In the morning the Rev. W. Robinson, of Cambridge, preached from Gen. xxii. 12. In the afternoon the Rev. C. Bailhache delivered a discourse upon Psalm cxviii. 25. In the evening the Rev. J. H. Hinton took for his text Heb. vi. 20, "Whither the Forerunner hath for us entered, even Jesus." The congregation was a crowded one; and the singing of the last hymn testified to the deep impression produced by the sermon. The Revs. D. Gould, H. Leonard, M.A., and T. Hands, took part in the services.

Bow.—Services in connection with the settlement of the Rev. J. H. Blake (late of Sandhurst) as pastor of the church meeting here, were held on Thursday, March 31st. The Rev. W. A. Blake, of Shouldham Street, opened the meeting with prayer; the Rev. C. Woollacott gave an address on "Protestant Nonconformity;" the Rev. J. A. Spurgeon on "Christian love;" the Rev. W. Stott on "The duty of the church to the world." The Rev. G. W. Fishbourne and other ministers took part in the service. The Rev. W. P. Balfern presided, and gave suitable advice to the church. On the following Wednesday evening a sermon was preached by the Rev. F. Tucker, B.A.

Peterborough.—Anniversary services were held in connection with the General Baptist chapel, Westgate, Peterborough, on April 10th and 11th, when sermons were preached with much acceptance by the Revs. B. O. Bendall, of Stamford, and F. Tucker, B.A., of London. On the 11th, a tea-meeting was held, when more than 200 persons were present. The amount raised, clear of all expenses, was £20 16s. 1d. This sum will be applied to the formation of a fund for the providing of increased accommodation for the congregation and school connected with the above chapel.

Newport, Mon.—On Friday, March 25, a social tea-meeting was held in the school-room of the Stow Hill Baptist Chapel (the Rev. J. Williams's); the object of which was to start a vigorous effort to liquidate the debt on this new place of worship. A gentleman has liberally promised to give the handsome sum of £300, if the church and congregation will raise £700 between Good Friday of 1864 and Good Friday of 1865. The challenge was accepted, and the friends have set to work to raise the needed amount.

Edenbridge.—At a quarterly social tea-meeting, held on Tuesday, April 12th, a purse of twelve guineas was presented to the pastor (the Rev. B. Dickens) by the church and congregation, as a token of their esteem and attachment.

Ministerial Changes.—The Rev. F. Wills intends retiring from the ministerial duties of Kingsgate Chapel, Holborn, as soon as arrangements are made by the church to elect his successor.—The Rev. Richard Bayly, late of Newark, has accepted a unanimous invitation to succeed the Rev. Dr. Evans in the pastorate of the Baptist church, Scarborough.—The Rev. T. Lewis has resigned the pastorate of the church at Truro, and will leave at the beginning of the present month.—The Rev. Fitzherbert Bugby, late of Preston, has received and accepted a very cordial and unanimous invitation to the pastorate of the New Union Church, Stretford, Manchester.—Mr. J. Jackson, of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon's College, has accepted a unanimous invitation to the pastorate from the church at Sevenoaks, Kent.—The Rev. J. Sella Martin has been obliged, on account of ill health, to resign the pastorate of the church at Bromley-by-Bow. He is about to return to America in the hope of being able to labour for the elevation of the coloured freed-men.—Mr. Joseph Joy, of the Metropolitan Tabernacle College, has accepted an invitation to become the pastor of the church at Hatfield, Herts.—The Rev. J. Lewis has resigned the pastorate of the church at Truro, and will leave at the beginning of the present month.—The Rev. J. Arnold, of Mr. Spurgeon's College, London, has accepted the unanimous invitation of the church and congregation connected with the Baptist chapel, Westgate, Rotherham, to become their pastor.—Mr. John Jackson, of Mr. Spurgeon's College, having supplied the pulpit at Sevenoaks, Kent, for six months, has accepted the unanimous invitation to the pastorate.—The Rev. C. Smith, of Langley, Essex, has accepted an invitation to the pastorate of the church at Hadleigh, Suffolk.—The Rev. William Leach, late of Northampton, has accepted the pastorate of the church meeting at the Plumstead Tabernacle for twelve months.—The Rev. G. Whitehead

(late of Shotley Bridge) has accepted the unanimous invitation of the Mission Committee of Union Chapel (Rev. A. Maclaren's), Manchester, to take charge of the new cause now opening out under their auspices in West Gorton, a rising suburb of that city. He intends commencing his labours there on the first Sunday in May.

GENERAL.

A NEW PICTURE OF THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD.—The Rev. D. Rees (formerly of Braintree, now of Tasmania), writing to *The Freeman*, says:—"Will you kindly permit me to introduce to the attention of your readers a distinguished young artist from Tasmania, now residing in London, Mr. Robert Dowling. His father, the Rev. H. Dowling, of Launceston, is the oldest and one of the most honoured Baptist ministers in any of these colonies. He has laboured in the island of Tasmania about thirty years. Mr. Robert Dowling, his youngest son, was brought up to a mechanical business, which he relinquished at the end of his apprenticeship, for the purpose of devoting himself to the art of painting. His extraordinary genius in this department, which had been more or less developed already, under many discouragements, could no longer be repressed. For some time he employed himself chiefly in portrait-painting in Tasmania and Victoria; but an intense desire after high attainments prompted him to visit Europe, and he sailed for England in 1857. After close application in the London schools, he produced his first picture, which appeared in the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1859,—'The Breakfasting Out,' being a scene at a breakfast stall in one of the streets of London. This was favourably noticed in *The Art Journal* of June, 1859. Since then he has, in addition to some minor productions, painted large pictures of 'The Presentation in the Temple,' 'The Raising of Lazarus,' and 'The Baptism of Christ.' Each of these has attracted much attention within a limited circle. The picture, 'The Baptism of Christ,' was suggested by an expression of regret which appeared in one of the English periodicals, that we did not possess any painting of the immersion in Jordan sufficiently correct and striking to furnish suitable illustrations for our juvenile books. It is right to state that Mr. Dowling has acquired such reputation for portrait-paintings that he has been honoured by the Prince and Princess of Wales with sittings. I understand that Mr. Dowling intends to ask permission to place his large painting, 'The Baptism of Christ,' in the Baptist Mission House before the next Annual Meetings. Our friends in England should know that Mr. Dowling is not only a distinguished artist, but also an earnest Christian man, and if he had only been as intent upon turning the fruits of genius to practical account as he has been in prosecuting the studies of his fascinating profession, this sort of introduction would have been needless."—[Since receiving Mr. Rees's letter, we have visited Mr. Dowling, and have seen his picture. It is a beautiful work of art. We understand that it will be engraved shortly, when we shall refer to it again.—ED.]

Editorial Notes for the Month.

THE visit of General Garibaldi has been no doubt the event of the month. Coming to England almost unexpectedly, and avowedly without any political purpose, he has received such a welcome from the English people as any monarch might have envied,—nay, such a welcome as no monarch ever received. We never felt so proud of our country as after this welcome to Garibaldi. Had he come immediately after his march on Naples, or when he laid down his dictatorship of Southern Italy, it might have been supposed that England, like herself, was but bowing down before the majesty of Success: but he came rather as the victim of Aspromonte, as the voluntary hermit of Caprera; and never did the shouts of the people rise so high, never was their enthusiasm more lofty and unbounded, than when they saw their visitor wounded and feeble, and resting painfully on his staff. One thing has been remarkable about this

visit,—the enthusiasm with which the General was received by all classes of the population. It was not only by the working men and the democracy that Garibaldi—himself avowedly a working man and a democrat—was cordially received. He found his home with one of the proudest of our nobles. He was visited by the Prince of Wales. The highest of our aristocracy—of all parties—crowded to the assemblies which were collected in his honour. The city of London received him with acclamations to give him the honour of their freedom, and he was invited by all the great towns of the kingdom to accept their hospitality and their applause. In the Crystal Palace—the *People's* Palace—he was received twice by five-and-twenty thousand of the people.

If we are not mistaken, this visit will not be without important results. For one thing, it will have reminded our countrymen that there is something after all nobler than success: it will have called forth their enthusiasm in a cause and in a man, with whom no selfish interests are identified: for another thing, it will have shown to both monarchs and nations, that the heart of England beats as true as it ever did, and that "freedom's battle" is not watched with "insular indifference" by the Englishmen of 1864. There is one other reason why we rejoice in this reception. It will be a source of strength and encouragement for many a day to one of the noblest men in Europe: a source of encouragement and hope while he shall still reside in the solitudes of Caprera,—a source of strength when he shall come to march with his heroes to Venetia and to Rome!

The day that witnessed the passage of Garibaldi, for the last time, through London, was the day on which the Danish Conference met for the first time in Downing Street. Before this page appears, that Conference may possibly be over: at the time we write, it has not been even hinted what its issue will be. We are told that a perfect harmony of view exists between France and England; and this, if true, is the best guarantee that the interests both of Denmark and of the Duchies will be conserved. Meantime, the Austrians and Prussians have urged on their armies, and Dybböl has fallen before their attack. We can only hope now that German "honour" will be satisfied, and that we shall soon see the end of this most cruel and unnecessary war.

Ecclesiastical events, for this month, are less interesting than usual: though, to us Baptists, the annual meetings of our Denominational Societies have been interesting enough. The result of the appeal on behalf of the Baptist Missionary Society we have announced elsewhere. *Two thousand seven hundred pounds* in hand, instead of a debt of *eight thousand pounds*, is the result of the labours and prayers of our brethren during the last six months. Let us thank God, and take courage! The other Societies have been able to give, on the whole, satisfactory reports. It has been decided to effect a union between the Irish Society and the Home Missionary Society,—a union which will, we believe, be beneficial to both. We trust that the meetings of 1864 will prove to have been the beginning of better days for all our Societies, and that we shall all individually consecrate ourselves with fresh devotedness to the work appointed for us in the kingdom of our Lord and Master.

THE

BAPTIST REPORTER.

JUNE, 1864.

OUR ASSOCIATIONS: THEIR UNDEVELOPED POWER.*

I TAKE for granted in this paper that Baptists have a right to denominational existence; that the extension of the Baptist denomination is desirable; and that it is the duty of Baptists to consolidate their strength and to enlarge their boundaries. It is also taken for granted that this duty can be performed more efficiently with than without organization. Much has been accomplished among Baptists by individual action. The wonder is, not that so little has been done, but that such progress has been made. Relatively to other sections of the Christian church (the Methodists alone excepted), the Baptists are more numerous to-day than they were a quarter of a century ago. Few, however, will deny that, had more systematic efforts been put forth, the result would have been still more gratifying. Whether the obstacles to a closer practical union were insurmountable in the past, I do not stay to inquire. The present, at least, invites to a more thorough co-operation. And if greater good can be effected by combined than by separate endeavours,—and on this assumption the appeal of this paper is based,—it must be wise to attempt the establishment and the employment of a well-considered organization for denominational work.

The Baptists are as yet an unorganized body. Let any man open the "Baptist Hand-Book" for 1864, and turn to the list of churches. He will find, to begin at the beginning, that of the 48 churches in Bedfordshire, 33 are unassociated; that in Berkshire, 10 are connected, and 18 are unconnected, with an Association; that Buckinghamshire contains 58 churches, only six of which are associated; and that of the 53 churches in Cambridgeshire, 48 belong to no Association. We visit London, and the absence of organization becomes still more remarkable. There are 170 churches within twelve miles of St. Paul's. Of these, 166 do not recognize in practice the connexional principle. Surrey and Middlesex are, in this respect, close imitators of the Metropolis. Kent is little better than its neighbours; for, out of its 75 churches, 61 are reported as unassociated. In other parts of

* A paper read before the Baptist Union, April 25th, 1864, by the Rev. CHARLES WILLIAMS, of Accrington.

the country it is different. Nearly all the churches in the Midland, the Western, and the North-Western counties, are members of some Association,—while there are only five unassociated churches in the whole of Wales.

It may here be asked, But of what value are these Associations? The conviction of their comparative uselessness has not a little to do with their unacceptability in certain quarters. A few, I know, refuse fellowship to such as preach or hold the doctrine of "duty faith"; but in the case of others, the utility of our Associations is doubted. Can any of us wonder at the doubt? Their annual meetings are deeply interesting and very pleasant, affording an opportunity for social intercourse as well as for Divine worship. They also assist in Home Mission work; though, in Lancashire and elsewhere, the County Mission exists alongside rather than as part of the Association. With all their short-comings, which are to be ascribed mainly to the jealousy of the churches, our Associations have rendered varied and important services to the Baptists; but I am not surprised that wise and able brethren, intensely practical in their aims, have come to the conclusion that they are not worth the energies and the time which are devoted to them. Could we make them more efficient, because more helpful to the denomination, the unassociated churches would not fail to appreciate their value; and England would soon be covered with a complete network of active and earnest Associations.

Is ecclesiastical confederation possible among Baptists? Dissenting from a church whose laws are made and whose chief officers are appointed by the State, and differing from other churches which place the supreme power in the hands of a General Assembly or a Conference, we have allowed ourselves to drift or to be driven into the opposite extreme. It has been forgotten that individuality is quite compatible with union. The free can combine; and their very freedom should impart a living reality to the combination.

Each church might continue to be the sole authority in matters which pertain to its own government, and yet associate with sister churches to give and to receive advice or assistance. There is need for this interchange of kindly offices. Disputes are perpetually ripening into disruptions; the process of decay, in other instances, is ever going on; unwise and therefore unsuccessful efforts to extend the denomination are repeatedly made. Meanwhile, our Associations stand by, not indifferent, but inactive, always lamenting these denominational excesses, but never interposing to prevent them. They fear to touch the liberty or the independence of the churches, as though the liberty to perish were a privilege of the dying, and independence of help a blessing to the helpless. We have in every Association experienced and influential brethren, to whom God has given the invaluable ability "to know what Israel ought to do." Wherefore should this power to avert or to remedy evil be withheld? If every Association had a small Committee, consisting of its sagest members; if this Committee were to undertake the duties of counsellors and arbitrators; and if the churches were to call this Committee to their aid in times of difficulty or of difference, much good would be done. The last appeal would still be to the

members of the church; but wise counsels would not be rejected, and friendly mediation might accomplish more than would be possible to judicial interference.

Our Associations should also become Home Missionary Societies. It is inexpedient and impolitic, I submit, to distinguish between the County Association and the County Mission. They ought to be one and the same body. If they uniformly were, we should presently see a deeper interest in the evangelization of our own country, which would be accompanied or followed by a revival of real religion in the churches. To open chapels and preaching-rooms, where places of worship are needed; to search out the intelligent and the gifted, and to employ them in the delivery of the Gospel message; and to plant and to watch the growth of churches; would afford an ample field for thought and toil. If our churches could be persuaded to commit themselves with diligence and zeal to this enterprise, our Associations would win the sympathies and obtain the support of every Baptist. In connection with Home Mission work, it would be found desirable to create local funds for the assistance of churches in building chapels and schools. Why cannot every Association be an auxiliary to the Baptist Building Fund? That Fund reflects discredit on the denomination. Its income (including re-payments) for the year 1862-3, was £2,201 15*s.* 10*d.* The Metropolis alone, or any one of our larger counties, might easily secure an equal annual income. And were all the Associations to unite in carrying out the objects of the Baptist Building Fund, we should soon be able to report its receipts at £20,000 a year.

Our Colleges and our Denominational Societies ought to be able to appeal with confidence to the Associations for help. As an illustration of what might be effected in this direction, let us take the Foreign Mission. The leaders of our Associations are better acquainted than any other men can be with the state of the churches, and have readier and surer access to them. Let our foremost men undertake to form a band of collectors in every church which belongs to their Association, for gathering missionary subscriptions, and let them exert their personal influence in increasing the number of quarterly or annual subscribers, and there will be no difficulty in guaranteeing to the Committee that their income shall never again fall below £32,000, or in assuring them that in another ten years their income shall be doubled.

One other suggestion remains. *Our Associations and the Baptist Union are not so closely related as they should be.* Might not each Association send its officers, and two or three of its members, as representatives to the annual meeting of the Union? And might not the Union, while still caring for Parliamentary proceedings, Continental Baptists, and American slaves, direct its attention chiefly (as it is doing this session) to the internal affairs of the denomination? If this were done, the delegation which I venture to recommend would add considerable interest to the anniversary of the Union, and the meetings of the Union would re-act beneficially on the Associations. We Baptists are remarkable for our individuality,—"there is no king in our Israel; but every man does that which is right in his own eyes." Without falling into the sin of desiring a king, and still insisting

on our personal accountability to God alone, we, nevertheless, may seek and find mutuality in our Associations and oneness in our Union.

It may be urged as an objection to these hints, that some of our Associations are too large to admit of their adoption. Nothing would be easier than to divide these into two or three districts. Each district could have its own Treasurer, Secretary, and Committee, whose duty it would be to transact all denominational business within its borders. And were the officers of the District Union to be the executive of the Association, the identity of the whole and its parts would be preserved. I allow that all this work could not be attended to at an annual meeting. But the Committee of the Association or the District Union could meet oftener than once a year. Periodical meetings might be held for the sole purpose of considering the claims of the world and of the churches; and at them the Committee could make its arrangements and appointments for a vigorous prosecution of its many-sided task. By some such provision as this, our Associations would be left untouched. The churches might still meet at an anniversary for fellowship with each other, and for communion with God. Union on the field of labour during the previous twelve months would sweeten and sanctify brotherhood in worship at our yearly festivals. We do not need any new organization. All that is required to make our denomination more useful than hitherto it has been, lies, waiting to be used, in the undeveloped power of our Associations.

There is a needs-be for this co-operation. Taking as my guides our "Hand-Book" for 1864, and the Census Returns for 1861, I look around me in the Lancashire and Cheshire Association, and I see twelve towns, not one of which has a population of less than 5,000, and whose united population is 131,312, entirely destitute of a Baptist place of worship. I step into the neighbouring county of York, and there I learn to my astonishment that there are thirteen towns, each of which has more than 5,000 inhabitants, and which altogether have in them upwards of 102,000 persons, in which the Baptists are unrepresented. In all England there are seventy towns, with a population of not less than 5,000 each, and which contain more than 754,000 souls, where there is no Baptist church. In many places, in which the Baptists have a local habitation and a name, they are few and weak. A Lancashire town, for example, of 102,449 inhabitants, reports only one Baptist church, with 129 members. London is as bad. Bethnal Green has four Baptist churches, whose united membership is about 450, while the inhabitants number 105,101. Islington has a population of 155,341, with four Baptist churches, in which there are some 600 members. If you cross the Thames you do not meet with better success in the search after Baptists. Bermondsey has 58,355 inhabitants; its Baptist churches number two, with a united membership of 220. Deptford is still worse; for it has but one Baptist church, with ninety-eight members, and a population of 45,973. "There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed."

Our churches, if all were associated, and our Associations, if all were well organized and efficiently worked, might possess much of this unoccupied land. It is a significant fact that in Wales, where the Association

principle is a realized power, the Baptists are far more numerous than in England, where the churches are so frequently unassociated, and where Associations exist for fraternal fellowship rather than for denominational work. The first four counties in the list of Welsh churches have a population of 300,277, and they rejoice in 147 churches, with 16,798 members. I compare these figures with our English statistics, and the result is highly favourable to the Principality. Take an agricultural district,—the first two counties in the list of English churches,—and you will find that its inhabitants are returned at 312,083, and its Baptist churches at seventy-six, with 6,169 members. The four Welsh counties, with a less population, report 10,629 more Baptists. We come nearer London, and select the county of Surrey (including Newington with its Tabernacle), and we are informed that this county of Surrey numbers 831,093 inhabitants, and eighty-four Baptist churches, with 9,304 members. Those four Welsh counties, with little more than one-third of the population of Surrey, report almost double the number of Baptists. Lancashire presents a still more painful contrast. Our county contains 2,429,440 inhabitants, and our ninety-five churches have 10,676 members. With eight times the population of the four Welsh counties, Lancashire has 6,000 fewer Baptists. I would not unduly press the comparison; but it is worthy of consideration whether the strictly federal character of the Welsh Associations has not aided the growth of the denomination in Wales. It is more than possible,—is it not probable?—that if the latent power of our Associations were fully developed, we should see a large increase in the number of Baptists in England.

Be this as it may, it is high time for Baptists to add denominational unity to individual liberty. This appears to me to be our peculiar task. Our fathers did other work—that which God gave them to do, and which their age required. It was theirs to resist the fast incoming corruptions of the first five centuries, and to protest against the spreading errors of priestism and worldlyism. It was theirs to hold forth the lamp of life amid the gross darkness of the middle ages, and to preach Christ crucified to those who heard from parish pulpits more about the crucifix than the cross. It was theirs to contend for the rights of conscience in the reigns of the Tudors and the Stuarts, and to purchase with their blood religious freedom for their descendants. It was theirs to win for the Baptists a place among the recognised churches of Christendom, and to make our denomination a power in the world. "Other men have laboured, and we have entered into their labours." "Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." Be it ours, then, to unite our counsels, our resources, and our activities, in denominational work for the extension of the kingdom of the Redeemer, ever seeking, alike in our personal exertions and in our combined efforts, to serve our Saviour-king, "even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

THE MARTYR BRETHREN.

A REMINISCENCE OF THE INSURRECTION IN JAMAICA.*

"No!—think not I can ever be
False to my Saviour's hallowed name
For aught that *thou* could'st offer me,—
A little life,—a little fame:
'Twere weak, indeed, to lose for them
A bright, unfading diadem.

"And if one passing pang I feel,
Deluded crowd! 'tis felt for you:
Ev'n thus resolved the Truth to *seal*,
I would that ye were martyrs too!
Blest Saviour!—Lord of earth and heaven,—
Oh! be their sins and mine forgiven."

THE period of insurrection in Jamaica called forth the utmost hostility of the planters and their partisans against all missionary instrumentalities. Various circumstances contributed to this; which, when fully known, diminish our surprise at the fact, although they fail to establish its justification. That a deacon of one of the Baptist churches should have confessedly originated the terrible convulsion, was one of these circumstances. The white population, in their alarm and indignation, cared not for the heavenliness of the elements from which the lightning's stroke had descended. Filled with madness, their only anxieties were for defence and retaliation. The innumerable meetings for devotional exercises naturally excited their most violent suspicion. Without doubt, opportunities for secret communication were thus afforded, upon which some *might* be ready to seize. Neither do we deny that many a slave would be ignorant enough to see no sin in accepting the motto, "We no work, if you no pay." They might even believe that God did not frown upon that purpose to be free, which to their minds was so simple, so peaceful, and so just. What wonder, then, if the planters had evidence that some Baptist, after holding a prayer-meeting on a certain estate, had afterwards spent two hours in secret conference with six principal men? And what wonder that, having such evidence, it should be widely diffused, and every day be more highly coloured with exaggerations, until the white people were unanimous in their resolve to suppress, by all means and at all costs, every semblance of religion which was not strictly conformed to the Established Church? Hence amongst the slaves the most pious and zealous were singled out for vengeance, at once most bloody, and furious, and blind. Hence, too, it was, that those to whom it fell to wreak this vengeance upon its hapless victims, were, as some have since confessed, wholly "beside themselves."

In the south-eastern part of the island, a striking illustration of these statements occurred. Amongst the multitudes to whom Mr. Phillippo's ministry was accompanied with saving efficacy, a poor slave, named Moses Hall, became a partaker of divine grace. The love of Christ glowed as a fire in his bones. It was soon impossible that he should hold his peace. The people around his place of abode, and far beyond, were sunk in ignorance and vice; but had never seen a missionary, and never heard the Gospel. To them he published all he had learned of the heavenly mystery. Upon the darkest of their sins he cast with tireless eagerness the flaming glory of the truth of God. Many were thus induced to journey with him, that they might hear more of these wondrous things from the missionary's lips. Nor was the faithful word without abundant fruit. Many

* By a Returned Missionary.

turned from sin to God. "The people which sat in darkness saw a great light, and to them that dwelt in the region of the shadow of death had light sprung up." Now the songs of Zion broke upon the evening's stillness. The music of many voices rang through the orange and pimento groves. Till now, those beauteous hills and glades, those sombre huts and sequestered villages, had never offered up such incense to their Lord. The balmy air had trembled beneath its burden of fragrance, but never had borne heavenward, as now it did, morning by morning, and evening by evening, the priceless tribute of praise and prayer. Now many a heart was contrite. Many a living spirit emerged from darkness into day. And new and thrilling were the joys which filled the breast, erst heaving only with woes for which no one cared, and which nothing could alleviate.

At length, in other and distant parts of the island, the insurrection had commenced. It mattered not that these poor people were far removed from the scenes of strife, and wholly ignorant of sedition. The dismay of the planters fancifully discovered in this calm and holy prayerfulness the unmistakable signs of coming revolt. Had barrels of gunpowder, hundreds of muskets, and stores of lead, been found secreted in the negro dwellings, not more satisfied had they been of criminal intent. Amongst themselves the subject was solemnly debated. No one doubted the natural relation between these meetings for prayer and the insurrectionary spirit. What were missionaries but social firebrands? What did these black brutes want with religion? It was denied they had "one soul amongst ten thousand." Should it prove otherwise, it was yet God's will they should be slaves. The Bible plainly said that. Then they were unfit to have religion. If they had souls, their ignorance would be their excuse; and so, in their slavery, without religion, they were in a better case for another world than those who were free! Besides, slavery and religion could never exist together. Everybody knew that! What, then, should they do? Could they not put an instant stop to this growing rage for religion? Could not the essential mischief be nipped in the bud? To do this, some means must be devised for seizing upon the chief man, and then, through him, the rest of the people must be terror-stricken before their plans for revolt were ripe.

Spirits and tobacco lent their mighty aid to this fiery discussion. The murderous purpose now arose from its rocky nest, and soared with terrible rapacity above its quarry. The little cluster of harmless and happy souls knew not what eagle eyes were fixed upon them; or dreamt what relentless talons were about to swoop upon the unresisting prey. It was now decided that Moses Hall should be seized at one of the meetings for prayer, and thence brought to trial and execution. The time, the place, the circumstances were all arranged. Thus satisfied, the party dissolved in comparative contentment; determined meanwhile never to retire to rest without seeing that their arms were duly prepared for every emergency.

The appointed time had soon arrived. The men who have to seize the victim warily advance to the humble cottage where prayer was wont to be made. Above such clusters of negro dwellings one was accustomed to see numerous cocoa-nut trees, whose long feathery leaves would lightly rustle in the evening air, whilst they gleamed like silver in the lustre of the moon. The clear sky, richly studded with glorious stars, would seem to speak aloud for God; since "there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." Amidst so beauteous a night these hardened men listen from afar to the sounds of praise which rise and fall in sweet accord with all the outward scene; but nothing checks their course, nor daunts their stern resolve. Now at the threshold they stand to listen; and explore, with searching eye, the unsuspecting throng. A doubt has seized them. The object of their search is *not* within. Now they have withdrawn a little, and are in eager converse, to this effect:—

"Ha! I see how it is. The black rascals in the great house have listened; and, finding what was up, have warned him out of the way. Now we're done."

"Well, so it seems! What shall we do now? Depend on it, he don't mean to be caught."

"I tell you what, though. The thing is getting serious. If he knows about it, nobody knows how soon we may be all burnt in our beds! It will never do to be done so."

"Oh, of course not! But, don't you see; one man is as good as another to make an example of. This fellow here that is speaking is just the same as the other. *I* know him. He goes about everywhere holding these meetings. I say, let's take him! As for this other fellow, we shan't catch him in the fact again."

So it came to pass, that whilst David's heart was yet glowing with holy joys, violent hands were laid upon him. Like his divine Master, "he was led as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." In the dark damp dungeon, upon the cold hard stones, that night he was fain to lay his weary limbs. But call him "Rebel" if you will! Load him with ignominy and reproach! Let him stand unfriended whilst things are laid to his charge of which he knoweth not! When the Lord maketh inquisition for blood, the men who dabbled their obscene hands in his may envy him his lot!

David was hurried to the town of Black River, tried, found guilty, and sentenced to death. We have no mementoes of his last days. We may guess his helpless amaze. We may think with what prayers and tears he knelt at the throne of grace. We may suppose how he girded up his loins to die, *as very many did*, for daring to give himself to God. Nothing, however, came to save him from the scaffold. It was by "that death he glorified God."

By special request, his head was, after death, severed from the body, and sent back to the men who had been guilty of his blood. Now, see them complete their task! The mere death of David does not suffice. They must terrify the whole people of their several estates.

A suitable pole is selected from the woodland. The people of the district are all assembled where various roads meet. The head of the martyr is fixed upon this lofty pole, and the trophy of insane cruelty set up amidst this throng of sorrowing spectators. Around that centre some hundreds of every age are gathered. These with shuddering horror are now made to hear recitals of the rebellion, and its failure,—the wickedness of the impotent slaves,—the vengeance of the mighty masters, and the numbers who are sacrificed. These sorrows, they are told, have all arisen from the "prayer-meetings." With fiercest threatenings they are warned to abandon these at once, and to despise the teachings of all missionaries and their followers. The only safe and happy course is to think no more about religion; for, cost what it may, their owners are determined to put a stop to it. David has been *first* punished, just for an example. They have no wish to be unnecessarily severe; and so an opportunity is given them now to turn away from such foolishness, which will certainly, if continued, bring ruin on them all!

Such was the strain of threatening invective to which the assembled slaves were compelled to listen. To crown the scene with final and overwhelming effect, the name of Moses Hall was now loudly called upon. Answering from the distance, he pressed through the crowd into the ring. Here he is roughly seized and thrust backwards against the pole upon which, far above him, is the head of his companion and friend. Standing there, he is thus addressed:—

"Now, Moses Hall, you have heard what these gentlemen have said; so take warning from this time. Let us see that you understand all about it. Tell us, now, whose head is that above you?"

In a firm voice he answers,—

"Dat's David, massa."

"Ha!—Yes!—Do you know what he is up there for?"

"Yes, massa. For praying, sir."

"Very well. Listen to me now. Do you know that it was *your head we meant should have been on that pole?* And so it would have been, if you had had what you deserve. But David has got what was due to you, that's all. We know all about you, and your doings. Mark you, now. From this time we shall have no more of these goings on. We'll stop your religious nonsense for you. Mind! From this time let us have no more of your 'prayer-meetings;' for if we catch you at it we shall serve you as we have served David. You had better take warning. Aye, *all* of ye. Whoever we catch at such things again, —it matters not who it is,—we'll serve you all alike! Do you hear that, sir?"

Moses did hear it, indeed. His whole soul quivered with excitement at every syllable. What could he do? To bow in calm submission was equal to a sacrifice of his principles, and a denial of his Lord. He knew his entire innocence of even the thought of rebellion; but all his protestations would be counted worthless, if not accepted as aggravations of supposed guilt. So, suddenly raising and clasping his hands, he kneeled down upon the earth, immediately beneath the martyr's head, saying, in solemn voice,—

"LET US PRAY!"

Immediately the whole circle knelt in prayer. What though David had, so cruelly and causelessly, been put to death! What though the furious persecutors were all present there! What though their imprecations and threatenings were both loud and deep! The whole throng kneeled down in prayer. And now, before the masters could recover their surprise, the voice of the poor slave in the centre rose clearly over the scene of death-like silence. He prayed that God would "bless all the massa buckra,—and make them to know the Lord Jesus Christ,—how he came into the world to save poor sinner,—that they might wash all their sins away in 'him' precious blood;' that so their souls might be saved at last," &c. With such fervour and unction did he pray *for them*, that they were all disarmed. They calmly listened. Defiance and love they had never seen in such firm fellowship before. What could men do who had never prayed for themselves? There was not one who could cast the first stone. The prayer ended, they turned away. Perhaps they were now satisfied that such religion was no sham. Perhaps they felt that men who could pray for them so, would rather die than injure a hair of their heads. Perhaps they were assured, by the dauntless unanimity they had seen, that blood-shedding would never repress Christianity. Or, the whole of such thoughts and feelings might at once pervade their minds. However that may be, the good man, the living martyr, who, though ready to die, they had not the heart to slay, continued his holy enterprise. The sounds of prayer and songs of praise still continue to abound; nor did those masters ever more attempt to stay the progress of that work of God.

The good man, ere I left the island, was grown old and greyheaded; but his succeeding years had developed the same fearless and pure consistency. I saw him last at the house of the pastor by whose voice he had at first been turned to God; and when soon afterwards the wings of the pestilence bore him home to heaven, none could more justly sing,—"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness; which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

We hold, then, that there is a martyrdom which lives, having fellowship with that which dies: and that he who, in the spirit of Christ, could thus dare

to say, "Let us pray!" was brother to him who had really sealed the truth with his blood.

"We saw him (said th' ethereal throng),
We saw his warm devotions rise,
We heard the fervour of his cries,
And mixed his praises with our song:
We knew the secret flights of his retiring hours:
Nightly he waked his inward powers;
His spirit rose to wrestle with his God,
And, with unconquered force, scaled the celestial towers,
To reach the blessing down for those that sought his blood."

THE SACRAMENTS.*

But some one will say, "Surely it is possible for me to drink of the water of the river of life, though I do not stoop and sip at any narrow sectarian cistern; surely I may be a genuine Christian man, although I attach myself to no visible church!" Happily, you may: even this is possible to you, so great is the mercy of God. So much more valuable is a perfect heart than an observance of outward forms. Yet it will be well for you to consider that the visible church was founded by Christ himself; that he himself was baptized, and broke bread and drank wine with his disciples; that the apostles, with all who received the Gospel in primitive times, followed in his steps; that only of late years has it been known that a man should embrace the truth of Christ without at once entering the visible fellowship of Christ; that all the wisest and best, or nearly all of those whom you esteem wise and good, have believed, and do at this day believe, it a duty, a sacred and imperious duty, to enter into the open doors of the visible church. It is very true that that church is no longer one. It is our shame and weakness that we have multiplied divisions, broken up the great house which ought to have united us in a common service into separate rooms, some of which are narrow and ill-ventilated enough. But if you wish to enter "the house of the Lord," it is a little singular that because it has many rooms you will enter no one of them. It were surely wiser to enter the room which has the noblest proportions and the purest air, in which you see many of your friends already assembled, and may hope to lead the freest, holiest life. To decline the outward communion of the faith because it has taken on diverse forms, is very much as though a hungry man, because he saw many dishes on the table instead of only the one best dish he looked for, should refuse to dine. It would rather seem the part of a sensible man, a man who took hold of things by the right handle, to fall to and make the best meal he could.

Then, again, as to the Sacraments. It is beyond dispute that, without observing them, we may believe the truths which they are intended to convey. But unless we suppose that we could suggest a happier disposition of the arrangements of his house than he himself was able to make, we must sorrowfully admit

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* Continued from page 203.

that, by our neglect of these ordinances, we lose something, lose much, which he meant to be ours. He would not have bidden us observe them, if it does not matter whether we observe them or not. All his works praise him, and among them his ordinances, by filling up a place which else were vacant, by answering the end of love for which they were designed: each gives a teaching, carries a gift, special and peculiar to itself. In Baptism and in the Supper there is lodged a grace which we can make our own only by being baptized and coming to the Supper. Else why were they appointed? Unless we say they are wholly superfluous—and so unlike the other works of Christ, each of which plays its special but necessary part in the whole—we cannot escape the conclusion that, by neglecting them, we forfeit some gift of grace which Christ meant us to have. Now we are none of us so rich in the gifts and graces of the Spirit that we can afford to put away from us any one blessing which we may secure. If we do put away any teaching or succour which his love has provided, we may be quite sure that we shall suffer for it some day. His life in us will lose one kind of appropriate nutriment, the loss of which *must* disturb its health. We shall not be so wise or so strong as we might have been. Our growth will, in some measure and some direction, be stunted and dwarfed. The divine ideal will not be realised in us in its due proportions or to its full stature.

"*Can't we save our souls without?*" O yes: no doubt we may save our souls, although we omit some duties and forego some aids. But if you only care just barely to save your souls, to get into heaven with a whole skin, one does not envy you, or think it matters very much after all whether your soul be what you called saved or not. *That* soul is not worth much whose only care, or whose supreme care, is for bare safety and a whole skin. Such a soul, indeed, is in by no means a safe condition: its skin, one should say, is likely to be a good deal bruised and lacerated by the chastening scourge. Our aim, our ambition, should be that of all noble Christ-like souls—to become perfect and entire, lacking nothing. While we neglect sacraments which the wisdom of Christ has appointed for our teaching and good, we must lack something, lack much. We are not, and cannot be, "complete in him," until we at least observe to do whatever he has commanded us to observe and do.

Nor is it quite fair, still less is it a sufficient excuse for our neglect of these ordinances, to allege that the Sacraments are sectarian. It is very true that divers sections of the visible church observe them in sundry manners. Still, Baptism and the Lord's Supper are recognised as Christian ordinances by every section. The *consensus* of the universal church may be adduced in their favour. And the only fair effect of the different modes in which these ordinances are administered is, that we should use the greater care in ascertaining which is the true, the appointed mode. All churches claim a common origin for their different methods of observance: all, in the last resort, appeal to the Inspired Documents. And these are in our hands. We can read them for ourselves: and if we read them honestly and with prayer, we shall come to a conclusion which, even though it be not absolutely accurate, should yet be the rule of our

conduct. He is not a wise man who, because the decision of a complex case is put into his hands, refuses to come to any decision at all. That is not a very intelligent or competent jury which, because on the evidence several verdicts are possible, declines to give any verdict. To say, "There are many Sects, therefore I will attach myself to none;" or, "The same sacrament is observed in different ways, therefore I will not observe it at all;"—this is about as bad logic as one could desire to meet, or to avoid. The true logic would rather be, "There are many modes of observing the same Sacrament, and therefore I will the more diligently seek to ascertain the true mode. There are many Sects, and therefore I will try the more earnestly to discover that which retains most of the freedom and purity of the primitive church, and in which I may most effectively labour to promote the union of all Christian men."

The Lord Jesus was very far from approving all the forms of piety which obtained in the Hebrew church; yet he entered its communion, was a consistent member of it to the day of his death, brought a new spirit into its observances, wrought an ennobling change on its laws; and thus, while in the Hebrew church, laid the foundations of that broader and more glorious temple which now embraces all the kindreds and tribes of men. It would be well for us to follow in his steps. It would be well if, instead of standing apart and carping at this form or that, we were to join the church which lies most open to us and ready to our hand, and to use any special gift of wisdom or grace which may be in us in labours to raise and broaden the tone of those who were in the church before us.

Finally,—The fact that the ordinances of the house of the Lord are *positive* commands, that they have an arbitrary meaning and value, suggests that our obedience of them should be as accurate, *as minutely accurate*, as we can make it. There is no natural and necessary connection between being cleansed from leprosy and bringing turtle-doves to a priest, or between letting go the mother-bird taken on the nest and length of days. The virtue of these commands lay in the fact that they were commands; and, therefore, the value of obedience to them lay in the exactness of the obedience. If, for instance, the leper took a brace of partridges instead of two turtle-doves to the priest, he could hardly hope that his offering would find acceptance with God. Or if a Hebrew lad out bird's-nesting let the young ones go, but took the mother-bird, *that* would not be at all likely to prolong his days in the land. Because these and the like precepts were tests of obedience, they must be accurately met, point for point, or their promise of good would not be fulfilled. Because the connection between obedience to them and the good things they promised was not a natural but an arbitrary one, it could not be expected that God should come out of his place to fulfil his promise unless men went out of their way to fulfil the conditions of the promise.

So with us. If Christ has said, "Believe and be baptized," we have no right to expect the special grace of baptism if the baptized do not believe, or the believer be not baptized. If he has said, "Do this in remembrance of me," we have no right to expect the blessing annexed to obedience, if, instead of doing "this," we do something else. Obedience to a moral com-

mand is in itself a blessing, and naturally leads on to other blessings. We cannot love our neighbours, for example, without being the better for it. But obedience to a positive command is not in itself a blessing, and may bring none. We may be plunged in water without being the better for it.

Hence we Baptists lay, and that very rightly, some stress even on *the mode* of the ordinance. We cheerfully admit that it is better to believe than to be baptized. But we contend both that, if we believe, we ought to be baptized, and that if we would secure the special teaching and grace of this positive ordinance, we must be baptized in the very mode observed and commanded by Christ. We do not say that, in itself, the bath has any advantage over the basin, or plunging over sprinkling. But we do say that we have no right to expect the full blessing of the ordinance unless we exactly fulfil its terms. So far as we can learn, the primitive believers were plunged and not sprinkled; and for fifteen centuries after Christ immersion was the prevalent, if not the only, mode of baptism practised by every section of the church. So far as we can see, the submergence beneath water and the emergence from it set forth more fitly than any other symbols the dying and rising again of the Lord Jesus, and that dying to sin and rising to holiness which are the chief effects of faith in him. And, therefore, as we desire to enter into the full fruition of his gracious promise, we observe, as exactly and scrupulously as we can, the very terms of his precept. Buried with him in baptism, therein also we rise with him, in the hope, in the full assurance, that as we have done *what* he bade us, *as* he bade us, we shall draw from his death the death of our transgressions, and find in his resurrection the power of our resurrection, first to righteousness, and then to an eternal glory.

FLOWERS.*

HAPPY is the man that loves flowers! Happy, even if it be a love adulterated with vanity and strife. For human passions nestle in flower-lovers too. Some employ their zeal chiefly in horticultural competitions, or in the ambition of floral shows. Others love flowers as curiosities, and search for novelties, for "sports," and vegetable monstrosities. We have been led through costly collections by men whose chief pleasure seemed to be in the effect which their treasures produced on others, not on themselves. Their love of flowers was only the love of being praised for having them. But there is a choice in vanities and ostentations. A contest of roses is better than of horses. We had rather be vain of the best tulip, dahlia, or ranunculus, than of the best shot. Of all fools, a floral fool deserves the eminence.

But these aside, blessed be the man that really loves flowers!—loves them for their own sake, for their beauty, their associations, the joy they have given, and always will give; so that he would sit down among them as friends and companions, if there were not another creature on earth to admire or praise them! But such men need no blessing of mine. They are blessed of God!

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* The Rev. Henry Ward Beecher.

Did he not make the world for such men? Are they not clearly the owners of the world, and the richest of all men?

He who only does not appreciate floral beauty is to be pitied like any other man who is born imperfect. It is a misfortune not unlike blindness. But men who contemptuously reject flowers as effeminate and unworthy of manhood, reveal a certain coarseness. Were flowers fit to eat or drink, were they stimulative of passions, or could they be gambled with like stocks and public consciences, they would take them up just where finer minds would drop them, who love them as revelations of God's sense of beauty, as addressed to the taste, and to something finer and deeper than taste, to that power within us which spiritualizes matter, and communes with God through his work, and not for their paltry market value.

Many persons lose all enjoyment of many flowers by indulging false associations. There be some who think that no *weed* can be of interest as a flower. But all flowers are weeds where they grow wildly and abundantly; and somewhere our rarest flowers are somebody's commonest. Flowers grown in noisome places, in desolate corners, upon rubbish, or rank desolation, become disagreeable by association. Roadside flowers, ineradicable, and hardy beyond all discouragement, lose themselves from our sense of delicacy and protection. And, generally, there is a disposition to undervalue *common* flowers. There are few that will trouble themselves to examine, minutely, a blossom that they have seen and neglected from their childhood; and yet if they would but question such flowers, and commune with them, they would often be surprised to find extreme beauty where it had long been overlooked.

If a plant be uncouth, it has no attractions to us simply because it has been brought from the ends of the earth and is a "great rarity;" if it has beauty, it is none the less, but a great deal more attractive to us, because it is common. A very common flower adds generosity to beauty. It gives joy to the poor, the rude, to the multitudes who could have no flowers were nature to charge a price for her blossoms. Is a cloud less beautiful, or a sea, or a mountain, because often seen, or seen by millions?

At any rate, while we lose no fondness for eminent and accomplished flowers, we are conscious of a growing respect for the floral democratic throng.

The buttercup is a flower of our childhood, and very brilliant in our eyes. Its strong colour, seen afar off, often provoked its fate; for through the mowing-lot we went after it, regardless of orchard-grass and herd-grass, plucking down its long slender stems, crowned with golden chalices, until the father, covetous of hay, shouted to us, "Out of that grass! out of that grass! you rogue!"

You cannot forget, if you would, those golden kisses all over the cheeks of the meadow, queerly called *dandelions*. There are many green-house blossoms less pleasing to us than these. And we have reached through many a fence, since we were incarcerated, like them, in a city, to pluck one of these yellow flower drops. Their passing away is more spiritual than their bloom. Nothing can be more airy and beautiful than the transparent seed-globe,—a fairy dome of splendid architecture.

As for marigolds, poppies, hollyhocks, and valorous sun-flowers, we shall never have a garden without them, both for their own sake, and for the sake of old-fashioned folks, who used to love them. Morning-glories,—or, to call them by their city name, the convolvulus,—need no praising. The vine, the leaf, the exquisite vase-formed flower, the delicate and various colours, will secure it from neglect while taste remains. Grape blossoms and mignonette do not appeal to the eye; and if they were selfish no man would care for them. Yet because they pour their life out in fragrance they are always loved, and, like homely people with noble hearts, they seem beautiful by association. Nothing that

produces constant pleasure in us can fail to seem beautiful. We do not need to speak for that universal favourite,—the rose! As a flower is the finest stroke of creation, so the rose is the happiest hit among flowers! Yet, in the feast of ever blooming roses, and of double roses, we are in danger of being perverted from a love of simplicity, as manifested in the wild, single rose. When a man can look upon the simple wild rose, and feel no pleasure, his taste has been corrupted.

But we must not neglect the blossoms of fruit-trees. What a great heart an apple-tree must have! What generous work it makes of blossoming! It is not content with a single bloom for each apple that is to be; but a profusion, a prodigality of blossom there must be. The tree is but a huge bouquet. It gives you twenty times as much as there is need for, and evidently because it loves to blossom. We will praise this virtuous tree. Not beautiful in form, often clumpy, cragged, and rude; but it is glorious in beauty when efflorescent. Nor is it a beauty only at a distance and in the mass. Pluck down a twig and examine as closely as you will; it will bear the nearest looking. The simplicity and purity of the white expanded flower, the half open buds slightly blushed, the little pink-tipped buds unopen, crowding up together like rosy children around an elder brother or sister,—can anything surpass it? Why, here is a cluster more beautiful than any you can make up artificially, even if you select from the whole garden! Wear this family of buds for my sake. It is all the better for being common. I love a flower that all may have; that belongs to the whole, and not to a select and exclusive few. Common, forsooth! a flower cannot be worn out by much looking at, as a road is by much travel.

How one exhales, and feels his childhood coming back to him, when, emerging from the hard and hateful city streets, he sees orchards and gardens in sheeted bloom,—plum, cherry, pear, peach, and apple, waves and billows of blossoms rolling over the hill sides, and down through the levels! My heart runs riot. This is a kingdom of glory. The bees know it. Are the blossoms singing? or is all this humming sound the music of bees? The frivolous flies, that never seem to be thinking of anything, are rather sober and solemn here. Such a sight is equal to a sunset, which is but a blossoming of the clouds.

We love to fancy that a flower is the point of transition at which a material thing touches the immaterial; it is the sentient vegetable soul. We ascribe dispositions to it; we treat it as we would an innocent child. A stem or root has no suggestion of life. A leaf advances toward it; and some leaves are as fine as flowers, and have, moreover, a grace of motion seldom had by flowers. Flowers have an expression of countenance as much as men or animals. Some seem to smile; some have a sad expression; some are pensive and diffident; others again are plain, honest, and upright, like the broad-faced sunflower and the hollyhock. We find ourselves speaking of them as laughing, as gay and coquettish, as nodding and dancing. No man of sensibility ever spoke of a flower as he would of a fungus, a pebble, or a sponge. Indeed, they are more life-like than many animals. We commune with flowers,—we go to them if we are sad or glad; but a toad, a worm, an insect, we repel, as if real life were not half so real as imaginary life. What a pity flowers can utter no sound! A singing rose, a whispering violet, a murmuring honeysuckle! Oh, what a rare and exquisite miracle would these be!

It is with flowers as with friends. Many may be loved, but few much loved. Wild honeysuckles in the wood, laurel bushes in the very regality of bloom, are very beautiful to you. But they are colour and form only. They seem strangers to you. You have no memory reposed in them. They bring back nothing from Time. They point to nothing in the future. But a wild-brier starts a genial feeling. It is the country cousin of the rose; and that has

always been your pet. You have nursed it, and defended it; you have had it for companionship as you wrote; it has stood by your pillow while sick; it has brought remembrance to you, and conveyed your kindest feelings to others. You remember it as a mother's favourite; it speaks to you of your own childhood,—that white rose-bush, that snowed in the corner by the door; that generous bush that blushed red in the garden with a thousand flowers, whose gorgeousness was among the first things that drew your childish eye, and which always comes up before you when you speak of childhood. You remember, too, that your mother loved roses. As you walked to church she plucked off a bud and gave you, which you carried because you were proud to do as she did. You remember how, in the listening hour of sermon, her roses fell neglected on her lap,—and how you slyly drew one and another of them; and how, when she came to, she looked for them under her handkerchief, and on the floor, until, spying the ill-repressed glee of your face, she smiled such a look of love upon you, as made a rose for ever after seem to you as if it smiled a mother's smile. And so a wild rose, a prairie rose, or a sweet-brier, that at evening fills the air with odour (a floral nightingale whose song is perfume), greets you as a dear and intimate friend. You almost wish to get out, as you travel, and inquire after their health, and ask if they wish to send any messages by you to their town friends.

But no flower can be so strange, or so new, that a friendliness does not spring up at once between you. You gather them up along your rambles: and sit down to make their acquaintance on some shaded bank with your feet over the brook, where your shoes feed their vanity as in a mirror. You assort them; you question their graces; you enjoy their odour; you range them on the grass in a row, and look from one to another; you gather them up, and study a fit gradation of colours, and search for new specimens to fill the degrees between two violent extremes. All the while, and it is a long while, if the day be gracious and leisure ample, various suggestions and analogies of life are darting in and out of your mind. This flower is like some friend; another reminds you of mignonette, and mignonette always makes you think of such a garden and mansion where it enacted some memorable part; and *that* flower conveys some strange and unexpected resemblance to certain events of society; this one is a bold soldier; that one is a sweet lady dear; the white flowering blood-root, trooping up by the side of a decaying log, recalls to your fancy a band of white-bannered knights; and so your pleased attention strays through a thousand vagaries of fancy, or memory, or vaticinating hope.

Yet, these are not home flowers. You did not plant them. You have not screened them. You have not watched their growth, plucked away voracious worms, or nibbling bugs; you have not seen them in the same places year after year, children of your care and love. Around such there is an artificial life, an associational beauty, a fragrance and grace of the affections, that no wild flowers can have.

It is a matter of gratitude that this finest gift of Providence is the most profusely given. Flowers cannot be monopolized. The poor can have them as much as the rich. It does not require such an education to love and appreciate them, as it would to admire a picture of Turner's, or a statue of Thorwaldsen's. And, as they are messengers of affection, tokens of remembrance, and presents of beauty, of universal acceptance, it is pleasant to think that all men recognize a brief brotherhood in them. It is not impertinent to offer flowers to a stranger. The poorest child can proffer them to the richest. A hundred persons turned together into a meadow full of flowers would be drawn together in a transient brotherhood.

It is affecting to see how serviceable flowers often are to the necessities of the

poor. If they bring their little floral gift to you, it cannot but touch your heart to think that their grateful affection longed to express itself as much as yours.

You have books, or gems, or services, that you can render as you will. The poor can give but little, and do but little. Were it not for flowers they would be shut out from those exquisite pleasures which spring from such gifts. I never take one from a child, or from the poor, that I do not thank God in their behalf for flowers!

And then, when death enters a poor man's house. It may be, the child was the only creature that loved the unbefriended father,—*really* loved him; loved him utterly. Or, it may be, it is an only son, and his mother a widow,—who, in all his sickness, felt the limitation of her poverty for her darling's sake as she never had for her own; and did what she could, but not what she would, had there been wealth. The coffin is pine. The undertaker sold it with a jerk of indifference and haste, lest he should lose the selling of a rosewood coffin, trimmed with splendid silver screws. The room is small. The attendant neighbours are few. The shroud is coarse. Oh, the darling child was fit for whatever was most excellent, and the heart aches to do for him whatever could be done that should speak love! It takes money for fine linen; money for costly sepulture. But flowers, thank God, the poorest may have. So, put white buds in the hair,—and honey-dew, and mignonette, and half-blown roses on the breast. If it be spring, a few white violets will do; and there is not a month till November that will not give you something. But if it is winter, and you have no single pot of roses, then I fear your darling must be buried without a flower; for flowers cost money in the winter!

And then, if you cannot give a stone to mark his burial place, a rose may stand there; and from it you may, every spring, pluck a bud for your bosom, as the child was broken off from you. And if it brings tears for the past, you will not see the flowers fade and come again, and fade and come again, year by year, and not learn a lesson of the resurrection,—when that which perished here shall revive again, never more to droop or to die!

Poetry.

HOLY SORROW.

Oft as memory's glance is ranging
Over scenes that cannot die,
Then I feel that all is changing,
Then I weep the Days gone by.

Yes, though Time has laid his finger
On them, still, with streaming eye,
There are spots where I can linger,
Sacred to the Days gone by.

Though we charge to-day with fleetness,
Though we dread to-morrow's sky,
There's a melancholy sweetness
In the name of Days gone by.

Cease, fond heart! to thee are given
Hopes of better things on high;
There is still a coming Heaven,
Better than the Days gone by.

Reviews.

Hidden Springs. By JOSEPH PARKER, D.D., of Cavendish Chapel, Manchester. London: Frederick Pitman.

WE own ourselves fairly at a loss to give an honest verdict upon this book of sermons, and sketches of sermons, which shall not seem almost ludicrously inconsistent with itself. We stand in doubt whether to approve or to condemn: whether the feeling we express should be one of admiration, or of something approaching to disgust. Or rather we are constrained to express both sentiments, and both to a very strong degree. The book bears on every page the trace and proof of power of no common order; it evinces considerable originality of mind; great reflectiveness; vivid imagination; much of that faculty for generalising which discerns the principles which underlie, and give significance to, facts and statements which an ordinary reader would deem commonplace; and, withal, a large share of the gift of forcible expression. The truths stated are important, and the mode of their statement often gives full weight to their importance. The expositions of Scripture are frequently clear, striking, and suggestive. The appeals are powerful and earnest, and the dealings with conscience, on the matter of every-day sins, bold, close, and outspoken.

All this and more of praise may be most sincerely given to the book; and we have no wish, by our after words, to bate one jot of the emphasis or the height of our commendation. And yet our feeling in reading the volume has not been one of unmixed, or even prevailing pleasure. There runs through it a tone of almost blustering assumption, and an air of egotism and affectation, to our mind nothing less than offensive. The author seems never to forget himself in his subject, and takes especial care that his readers shall not forget him either. This egotism appears with more or less prominence throughout the book, but culminates in such passages as the introduction to the sermon entitled "A Troubled Life." It peeps out rather amusingly, too, in the significant allusions to the size of Cavendish Chapel, and the largeness of the congregation which assembles there, "this prodigious edifice," "so vast a multitude as I now address," &c. And, then, for assumption, what else is it that leads a preacher to account not only his finished sermons, but also his "outlines and hints"—the sketches he makes for the pulpit—worth printing just as they are? What else sounds in the ever-recurring "I pronounce," "I claim," &c., and in the oracular tone, as of one announcing a new discovery, in which many thoughts, just enough, but certainly not original, are set forth. The affectation we have charged upon the book begins with the title, and appears yet more conspicuously in the ridiculous sub-title, "Telegrams," prefixed to one section, which consists of brief thoughts culled, we suppose, from the author's sermons. The same vice taints the style almost throughout. Dr. Parker would seem to think simplicity the worst sin of a preacher. In his determination not to be commonplace, he strains and labours after unusual expressions till he loses himself in vagueness, or swells into bombast. Thus we have such wretched specimens of *falsetto* writing as "the centralizing influence of God's redeeming and sanctifying idea"—which, being interpreted, we suppose means the uniting influence of the Gospel. The Cavendish Chapel hearers may be able to translate such a phrase as, "All blessing is with the Absolute;" but we are sure most people would have understood better some such statement as "God only can bless." And here is a choice bit of rant about the importance of accuracy in definition:—"Error in definition has set fire to nations, and roused idiot kings to arms. Deadlier still has been its result in moral considerations; it has flung brilliant minds off *the pivotal centres*, and sent them plunging through the darkness of despair."

We speak most sincerely when we say that it gives us pain to write thus, and especially of a book which has so much that is excellent in it. But we cannot honestly, or conscientiously, for-

bear to protest against a style of preaching so out of keeping with the overpowering grandeur of the theme of the Christian ministry, and so subtly harmful in its influence on the religious taste and intelligence of our congregations. We would give all scope for individuality in the style of a preacher's thought and speech. We could even be tolerant of dulness itself, if it be sincere and earnest. But anything like self-display in preaching passes our patience, and the vagueness which simulates profundity, and the pomposity of phrase which mimics eloquence, provoke our indignation. If it were a mere matter of literary taste, it would not be worth wasting words upon. But it is more than this: it is a question of the adaptation of preaching to instruct and edify. And the issues of that question are too solemn to allow us to keep silence at the bidding of complaisance, or even of regard to the feelings of any man. Dr. Parker has powers of thought and speech possessed by few. Let him learn the hard lesson of self-forgetfulness, and cherish more faith in naturalness and simplicity, and we shall be the first to receive his teachings with thankfulness ourselves, and to recommend them earnestly to others.

Memoir of Robert Alfred Vaughan. By ROBERT VAUGHAN, D.D. London: Macmillan & Co.

THE lamented author of "Hours with the Mystics," died on the 26th October, 1857, at the age of thirty-five years; and rarely has any man passed from the Christian literary circles whose loss to the cause of literature has been more deeply deplored. Never perhaps was a more tender tribute to affection more gracefully and more wisely made, than the Memoir of the son by the father. The feeling which pervades these pages, and the purpose which prompted their preparation, is thus expressed:—"It was not, I suppose, unnatural for me to have thought that, should anything in my own somewhat laborious life be deemed worthy of a record, the hand now cold and still, but which had so often guided the pen at my suggestion, would have been the hand to perform that piece of service. But the Supreme will has not so determined. It is left to the father to tell the story of the son, and to do what may be done toward rendering a life once so rich in promise, but which has proved so brief, as influential as may be." No one but the father could have written the Memoir of the son, and there is through all the record a pensiveness which gives grace and tenderness to the narrative of a life in itself singularly interesting and instructive. The Memoir is to a large extent autobiographic, and is expanded from the original sketch which preceded the two volumes of the collected works of the deceased by extracts from his diary and letters.

It is assigned to some men to live for an unconscious work, to complete that work only as part of a conscious plan, and in its completion to terminate and glorify their life. Mr. Vaughan has done this. He contemplated a large work which should be the monument of his life. When that life was beginning to fade, he entered upon a series of studies which were intended to enable him the more perfectly to use his previously made acquisitions; and he wrote his "Hours with the Mystics," partly as an introduction to his greater work. He saw that book published, heard the applause which greeted him, and the hopes that were expressed on every side that the same pen might give the world a series of such valued and precious books, and then he died. If it were not that we should arraign the wisdom of Him who cannot err, we should say we could have better spared any hundred of the ordinary authors who retail the thoughts of other men in the form of volumes of letterpress.

This Memoir reveals to us much of the inner life of Mr. Vaughan, and we have rarely met with the Christian life under more tender and devout aspects than in him. As a preacher, he was not what is commonly called a popular man; but he possessed power in the pulpit which is of entirely a higher kind than that usually designated popular. He was an intensely spiritual thinker. All his sermons were pervaded by spirituality. They were not of the kind, therefore, to secure a sudden fame, but they made for him a position which, had health and vigour been spared him, must have raised him to the highest place as a Christian preacher. Respecting his vast and varied attain-

ments, we cannot do better than quote from Sir James Stephen's letter to the bereaved father:—"I have been reading the two volumes with more than usual deliberation; but I find it difficult to say to you exactly what is the impression upon my mind. Perhaps they have most moved me to wonder; to wonder, I mean, at my own failure in times past rightly to appreciate him: so that when I recall what passed at my interviews with him in his illness, I hardly know how he came to be so tolerant of my talk, or how I (even with all the apologies of age) could take upon me to discourse so copiously to such a man, and scarcely to exact of him an answer. It is little to say, that he had attained an intellectual stature to which it behoves *me* to be looking upward. Very few men, indeed, of his time stood on his level. His mind was so rich; his spirit so expanding to embrace whatever was praiseworthy, and so hearty to do battle with whatever was base and false; his range of thought so widely extended; and the play of his fancy, range where it might, so brilliant and so ceaseless, that I hardly know to what he might not have been equal, if it had been the good pleasure of God that his services should have been rendered during a long life in this world."

Every Christian minister into whose hand this Memoir may come, will thank Dr. Vaughan for having written it.

Gleanings among the Sheaves. By the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. London: Passmore & Alabaster.

The short dedication prefixed to this little book tells us all about it:—"To the numerous hearers, and to the innumerable readers, of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon's sermons, this unpretentious little volume is respectfully dedicated by the publishers. The stems grow up every week: the shocks appear once a month: the sheaves are bound together once a year. And it is thought that these samples gleaned from the sermons will be welcome to many, but chiefly to those who are most familiar with the ample fields from which they are gathered." This dedication is not much to our taste, but the book is. More recommendation it does not need from us, but an added testimony to its acceptance is, that more than eight thousand copies were sold on the day of publication.

Christian Cabinet.

THE LOOK TO HEAVEN.

In a beautiful German fable, representing our progenitor as weeping over the first human victim of death, and exclaiming, "What now remains for me in my lamentation?" a bright cherub from the skies answers, "*Der Blick gen Himmel!*" *The Look to Heaven!* Yes, the look to heaven is all that remains to any of us in our lamentation. It was by listening to the voice of Satan rather than the voice of God, that man ceased from looking to heaven where angels soar and sing, and looked only to earth where serpents creep and hiss. Looking only to earth, what does he see? Momentary pleasures, convulsive delights, deceitful promises, vain anticipations, crushing fears and sorrows, thickening glooms, a dreaded future, the speedy loss of home and of all possessions, the last bud of hope withered, and the last wreath of honour faded, a cold rayless tomb, and an eternal night of death! But what does he see, looking to heaven? He sees God, in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose hand are pleasures for evermore. He sees the eternal throne, whose radiance floods heaven and the heaven of heavens with glory; the protection of all virtues, the security of all treasures, the fountain of all delights, and the assurance of eternal life. He sees the celestial gates opening upward and onward through the skies in endless perspective, the long vista of ages stretching eternally before him from glory to glory—the very gates through which he is soon to pass, and the way he is to mount with seraphic wing and vision.

Looking only to earth, like the beast that perisheth, he sees only the beast's portion. Strange and monstrous phenomenon! An immortal being seeking only the portion of the mortal brute! He has what the beast has not, eyes that can look up to heaven as well as down to earth; he can hold wide discourse with the over-arching universe, commune devoutly with the suns and stars that shine and twinkle on high; he can *also* soar, in thought, *beyond* the remotest star that twinkles on the brow of night, into those profounder depths of spiritual glory which no mortal eye hath seen; he may thus, if true to his high destiny, anticipate endless succession and accumulation of the riches of the inheritance awaiting the immortal child of God.

Let us repeat, then, heir of God, *Look to Heaven!* See what is before you. The sovereign remedy for all the sorrows of earth is found in looking to heaven. Are you oppressed with cares and anxieties? Do the anxious inquiries, What shall we eat, and wherewithal shall we be clothed, weigh heavily upon you, as you think of your dependent families? Are you borne down with sickness, infirmities, or the weight of years? Do you mourn the loss of beloved relatives by the stroke of death? Does the world look sad and desolate as you call to mind dear friends that you will never again see in the flesh, joys that will never return, hopes and pleasures that have vanished like the momentary hues of the rainbow? Let a passing stranger whisper in your ear, *Look to Heaven!* There, friends never die; there, joys and hopes never fail; there, the rainbow of the everlasting covenant, spanning the wide arch and encircling the throne, shines for ever and ever with all the radiance of the Godhead,—not one of its beauties ever dimmed, not one bright hue ever effaced,—but all glowing with ever brightening lustre, as the ceaseless ages roll on, in token of God's unchanging love. Looking thither with the eye of faith—*faith*, not fancy, *faith*, not speculation, *faith*, not presumption, faith in God's sure word of promise, that faith which is "the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen"—your soul shall repose in peace amidst earth's strifes, in abundance amidst earth's wants, in hope amidst earth's losses, and in joy amidst earth's sorrows. This is that steady abiding under the shadow of the Almighty to which Henry Martyn aspired, and which he so richly enjoyed in the loss of all else.

Parent, is your heart burdened for a child, perhaps one wayward and dissolute, and perhaps also far from you; does your oppressed and anxious spirit cry, What can I do for him? *Look to Heaven!* Look, and doubt not. See that Almighty arm outstretched. Read that promise—"*Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, I will give it you.*" Bind that promise to your heart, plead it in filial confidence, rest and rejoice in it.

Reader, think it not too trite and homely to say, "We shall soon see the end of all things earthly." This is not our home. And what is to remain for us when we stand on the verge of eternity, taking our last look at earth? When our worn heart-strings are breaking, and the crimson current runs feebly, and the pulse tires and halts, and the last sounds of earthly friendship die on our ears, and our mortal vision grows dim, and our mortal spirit, trembling between two worlds, reaches forth for a place of rest—what then remains? One thing, only one that avails—*the Look to Heaven.* If we can then see "the world of spirits bright," the golden gates uplifted, the open vista, and the long perspective, the shining throng awaiting us; if we can then, like Stephen, "See the heavens opened, and the Son of God standing on the right hand of God,"—we shall have bravely fought life's great battle, and won the victory; all our future career on the vast eternal ocean of being will be one of "glory, and honour, and immortality." Again and again, then, be it repeated; let it be inscribed in flaming words upon every guide-post on life's journey—*Look to Heaven!*—*The Rev. Dr. Winslow.*

ANSWERING OUR OWN PRAYERS.

A WEALTHY farmer knelt one morning before his family altar. Among other petitions, he prayed, with great apparent earnestness, that God would clothe the naked, feed the hungry, relieve the distressed, and comfort all mourners.

A neighbour sat on the door-stone

listening to that prayer. He was one of those in distress, and had come to obtain relief. He was an industrious, hard-working man, supporting his family by the fruit of his daily toil. This means of support had of late been cut off. His wife was sick, and as he was not able to hire a nurse, his time was necessarily devoted to nursing and family cares. Finding himself in want, he had resolved to come to his wealthy Christian neighbour, and ask him for two bushels of wheat, promising to pay him with his first earnings.

As soon as the prayer was ended, he went in and proffered his request. It was met with a polite refusal. The wealthy farmer was very sorry that he could not accommodate, but he needed all his wheat to enable him to lend a large sum of money. The poor man left the house, sad and disappointed. As soon as the door was closed, the farmer's little son stepped up to him and said,—

"Father, did you not ask God to clothe the naked, feed the hungry, relieve the distressed, and comfort all mourners?"

"Yes, my son; but why do you ask the question?"

"Because, father, if I had your wheat I would answer that prayer."

The man was called back and received what he had asked for. Doubtless the farmer found a blessing that day which would not have been his if he had not done what he could to answer his own prayers. He could not relieve all in distress, but he could relieve *one*.

Many petitions remain unanswered because the petitioner does not do what he can to answer his own prayers. A man of irascible temper prays in the morning that God will make him meek and gentle that day. He leaves his closet and commences his routine of daily duties. Soon some cause of vexation arises. The man flies into a passion without one effort to control his temper. Will that man receive an answer to his prayer that God will help him that day to be meek and gentle? Assuredly not, for he is not doing what he can to answer his own prayer.

Again, a Christian, in his morning devotions, prays for a spiritual and heavenly mind that day; but having left his closet and the family altar, he never once during the day lifts his thoughts toward God and heaven. Will that man obtain an answer to the petition of the morning? Certainly he will not, for he is not doing what he can to answer his own prayer. God's grace is indeed a royal gift, which he alone can bestow; but as he feeds the hungry through human instrumentality, so does he bestow his grace in connection with human efforts.

Christian Activity.

THE BAPTISTS IN FRANCE.

We propose to furnish this month a short sketch of the origin and growth of the existing Baptist churches in France. We shall not refer to the labours of the Baptist Missionary Society in Brittany, as continual mention is made of them in "The Missionary Herald," a publication with which we presume all our readers are familiar. Our notice will be confined to the movement with which our brother M. Dez, who has recently been in this country collecting for the erection of a Baptist chapel in Paris, is more particularly identified. We shall see, as we trace its progress, how mysteriously God oftentimes works—how he chooses the weakest instruments for the accomplishment of his purposes—and how he watches over his people, and, in spite of all opposition, conducts forward his "sacramental host" to final victory.

At a meeting of the American Baptist Missionary Union in 1832, a resolution was adopted, instructing the Board of Managers to inquire into the expediency of establishing a mission in France. The revolution which two years before had taken place in that country, and which had resulted in placing Louis Philippe upon the throne, had also done much, it was believed, to

loosen the hold of the Roman Catholic church upon the minds of the people, and to prepare the way for the extension of evangelical truth. The special objects proposed for such a mission were the revival and increase of the Baptist churches there, and the general dissemination of the Gospel among the people. The Board, after suitable inquiries, determined to send an agent to France, in order to ascertain the condition of the churches, and the opportunities which the country presented for the spread of Christian truth.

The Rev. Ira Chase, D.D., Professor in the Theological Seminary at Newton, was appointed to this work, and sailed for Europe in October, 1832. After spending a little time in Paris, he repaired to the *Department du Nord*, where the Baptist churches of France were said to be the most numerous. He found them here in a scattered and dilapidated condition,—cherishing the principles of uncorrupted Christianity, but defective in organization, and subject to the inroads of every species of error. He inquired particularly concerning the condition of Protestantism in France, and on his return to the United States submitted to the Board a full report of his observations and the conclusions to which they led him, and recommended the establishment of a permanent mission in the country.

In June, 1834, the Rev. Isaac Wilmarth was sent by the Board to commence the mission. The next year he was joined by the Revs. E. Willard and D. W. Sheldon. For some time they all resided in Paris, preaching in English, distributing tracts and religious books, and writing for the press, and at the same time perfecting their acquaintance with the French language. In the spring of 1836, Messrs. Wilmarth and Willard removed to Douai, a large and celebrated town in the north of France, for the purpose of establishing near there a mission school for the instruction of candidates for the ministry, and others who might desire to study the doctrines of the Gospel. The place ultimately selected for the school was Nomain, a village about twelve miles from Douai, in which was a Baptist church. This church, together with those at Lannoy, Bertry, and Orchies, were at their own request adopted by the mission. From these central points the missionaries and their French assistants went forth into the surrounding country, and subordinate stations were soon established in other villages for the regular preaching of the Gospel. Several other persons were employed as colporteurs, who traversed the districts of the north distributing tracts, books, and Bibles, and in this way calling the attention of the people to the truth of Christianity.

The mission thus commenced was carried on for many years with some degree of success; though from various causes it never was attended by those prosperous results which we have witnessed in Germany, Sweden, and other parts of Continental Europe. Its efforts at length began to grow feeble—the agents, one by one, were withdrawn, and the French brethren are now left entirely to themselves. And we are not sure that this, instead of being a calamity, will not prove for the Baptist cause in France a great blessing.

There are now five Baptist churches in France, besides those in Brittany, and one at Mühlhausen in connection with the German Baptist Union. Let us glance at these five churches in the order of their formation.

At Chauny (Aisne), where M. Cadot labours as an evangelist, there is a church of one hundred members. It may be said that a monk laid the first stone of this spiritual edifice. About 1794, this monk, who was one of the sufferers in the Revolution, gathered several persons into a congregation in a small village called Villiquier-au-Mont, not far from Chauny, and began to teach them what he considered the way of life. He got them to procure copies of the Bible, and urged upon them their duty and privilege to read it for themselves. He pointed out some of the errors of Popery, such as the worship of images, and the use of prayers in an unknown tongue. He also enforced the sacredness of the Lord's day. But, ignorant of the doctrine of justification through faith himself, he did not explain it to his hearers. Consequent upon his labours many persons were awakened to seriousness; they committed portions of the Gospels and Psalms to memory, and repeated them night and morning, instead of the prayers of the Romish Church; and they were fully prepared for clearer

light. No further fruit appeared, however, till 1830, when a faithful Christian, who was a member of the Protestant church at Argicourt, in the Department du Nord, but resident at Villiquier-au-Mont, began to preach Christ to his neighbours. He was regarded at first with suspicion, because he was a Protestant, and the tracts he offered were refused; but a gentleman called Hersigny, whose mind had been partially enlightened through the teaching of the monk, and who loved the Scriptures much, seeing this Protestant's reverence for the Word of God, listened to his instructions, and received from his hands a tract, entitled "Le Fils Aîné" ("The Eldest Son"), and thus saw more distinctly the method of pardon and Divine acceptance. Shortly after, a Christian woman exhibited her light in this village, and an evangelist was sent to preach in the neighbourhood. These entered upon the labours of their predecessors, and were the means of bringing Hersigny and others to Christ, in whom they found peace. They now saw it their duty to obey Christ in baptism; and, in 1832, Madame Hersigny and her sister were baptized by M. Thieffry, pastor of one of the churches founded by Henri Pyt; and the year after her husband followed her example. The Romish priests soon set themselves to crush the infant community. A little chapel which Hersigny had erected at his own cost was closed; and the work went slowly on till 1837. In the summer of that year, the Rev. E. Willard visited Villiquier-au-Mont, in company with Pastor Dussard. As the result of this visit, several persons were converted and baptized. In 1838, M. Cretin became pastor of the little flock; and through his instrumentality and that of Esther Charpentier, the sister to whom we have already alluded, many were brought into the fold. In 1840, M. Lepoids, a young man who had been converted from Popery three years before, was sent to labour with this church; and the work continued to prosper till 1846. An order was issued in that year by the Prefect of Laon, instigated by the Bishop of Soissons, forbidding M. Lepoids to preach or administer religious ordinances, and authorising all Government officials in the department of Aisne to prosecute him if he dared to act against the prohibition thus issued. Imprisonment and fines immediately followed. For a year and a half the brethren had to endure sharp persecution. The Lord, however, enabled them to continue steadfast through all. In 1848, when the last French Revolution took place, all the fines they had paid were returned, and the chapel at Villiquier-au-Mont was re-opened. Under the *régime* of liberty the cause gained strength; and, in 1850, it was judged necessary to build a chapel at Chauny. For two years the Gospel was preached in this house to many souls. But in 1853 it was closed by order of the Government; and, in spite of all the efforts that have been made to open it again, it remains shut to this day. Still the leaven has spread. There is, as we have previously stated, a church of a hundred members in Chauny and the neighbourhood; and every year some are added to the Lord.

At Verberie (Oise), between Chauny and Paris, there is a Baptist church that was formed in 1838. In that year Madame Charpentier was called to visit Le Meux, a village near Verberie. She found several persons there prepared to receive the Gospel, and urged them to invite M. Cretin, who was then labouring at Villiquier-au-Mont, to visit them. They did so, and he complied with their request. A lady was converted at his first visit: others followed. They were baptized, and formed into a church immediately after. Subsequently, M. Foulbœuf, who, like all the other converts, had been a Roman Catholic, went to labour at Le Meux; and God blessed him greatly. In 1845, twenty persons were brought to embrace the truth. The work of this devoted man was, however, soon interrupted by death. Consequently, M. Cretin was obliged to leave Chauny to superintend this part of the vineyard. The liberty of 1848 was the occasion of a wider diffusion of the truth here, as elsewhere; and several were converted. But since that time this church has had to pass through severe trials. Many members have emigrated to America; some have been excluded; some have died. At present there is no pastor. There are thirty-five members; there are six places of worship, and thirteen preaching stations. Hundreds of persons are accessible to the Gospel; and it is of

the utmost importance that a faithful man should be sent among them.

The church of La Fère and Athies (Aisne) formerly existed in two churches. The Word of Life was conveyed to Athies in 1840 by a colporteur of Lille, and after that by a Baptist colporteur sent there by Mr. Willard. A small church was formed, and continued to grow. At the time the Gospel was introduced to Athies, it was also proclaimed for the first time at Le Fère. A church of ten members was formed at this latter place in 1848. The same year the church at Athies united with it, and M. Foulon became pastor of the united flock. From 1848 to 1856 the believers have suffered severe persecution. Their two chapels were shut up, and all meetings were forbidden. They continued to assemble, however, in private houses and in the woods. They grew bold through trial. Many attended their meetings and joined the church. In 1857 Pastor Foulon emigrated to America, and several of his members followed him. He was succeeded in the pastorate by M. Boileau, under whose care the church has prospered much. There has been no persecution for the last three years. The chapel at La Fère has been opened, though not by authority, and the brethren worship in it every Lord's day. The church numbers a hundred members, many of whom live in the surrounding villages, and some of whom have to travel far to the house of God. One old woman, seventy-five years of age, walks several miles to be in her place every Sabbath. If the brethren enjoyed full religious liberty, greater good might be done.

"Denain, in the Department du Nord, is a little industrial town, which has increased considerably in the last thirty years, on account of the manufactories, distilleries, and iron-foundries that have been built, and principally on account of its coal mines. The workmen are very numerous. They live in brick houses, generally but of one storey, which belong to their employers, who let them out at four and a half francs per month. These miners are not usually of the best character; on the contrary, they are gross in their conversation and habits. Very many of them are addicted to drink, and when in drink are turbulent and vicious." The Baptist church here was established only a few years ago. Its origin was very humble. A poor man (poor, but rich in his possession of the pearl of great price) was the first to scatter the seed. He traded in poultry and eggs, and when selling his goods to his customers, offered them the milk and wine of salvation, without money and without price. Some accepted the blessings so freely offered, and in their turn spoke of them to others. One poor woman, thus converted, endured great persecution, and was honoured in saving many. Another person, a miner, having found Christ, began to preach him at the bottom of the mine. The power of the Lord was displayed, and many remarkable trophies of Divine grace were raised up. This was the beginning of the church at Denain. M. Boileau was appointed pastor of the flock, and laboured there for some years; till, to the great grief of all who knew him, and among whom he had wrought, he was obliged to leave to take charge of the larger church La Fère. There are forty members in church-fellowship. The friends meet in a small and inconvenient house. It would not cost much to erect a suitable chapel, but the poverty of the church prevents their engaging in such a work. The members are for the most part converted miners and labouring men, of rough exterior, but who, after having been touched by grace, have become noble champions of the truth. M. Cretin now labours there, with many tokens of the Divine blessing.

In 1839, and perhaps before that, a few Baptists used to assemble in the Rue St. Etienne du Mont, in Paris, for worship. But the present Baptist church in Paris, worshipping in the Rue St. Roch, was not formed till the 28th of May, 1850; when four persons, who had been previously baptized by Pastor Cretin, united in fellowship. The following year several members were added to this church. In 1852, an evangelist was sent to labour in Paris; but for nearly two years subsequent to this the church had no pastor, and was dependent on the visits of ministers from a distance for the administration of baptism and the Lord's Supper. At length Mr. Willard removed from Douai to Paris in October, 1853, and continued to labour there till the end of August, 1856, when, in consequence of the dimi-

nution of their income caused by the commercial crisis then felt in the United States, the American Baptist Missionary Union were compelled to recall him. Mr. Willard, at his departure, entrusted the Paris church to the care of M. Dez, the present pastor, who is assisted in his ministry by two evangelists and a colporteur. There are now seventy members in the church, and about a hundred persons attend every Sabbath to hear the Word of Life. In addition to these there are above a hundred Roman Catholics, whom the pastor and his fellow-labourers visit to expound the Scriptures to them, and aid them in their private search for the truth. There is a Sunday school in connection with this church, as there is in connection with all the others.

Such is our present position in France. The progress made may seem small, and it *is* small compared with that which has been made elsewhere. Still we must take into account all the circumstances. In every church the beginning was insignificant. All the converts have been turned from the superstitions of Popery. Most of them have had to suffer domestic, if not public persecution. The priests do their utmost to oppose the progress of the truth. The Government, while it winks at the meetings of our brethren in some places, forbids them in others, and retains its persecuting laws on its statute-books. The Baptists have no periodical or newspaper in France, so that they cannot reply to the attacks made on them by other Protestant churches. The American Baptist Missionary Union not being able to pay the salaries of the agents, their number has been from time to time diminished. The churches are too feeble to support their pastors without foreign aid. We Baptists of England must therefore hold out towards them a helping hand.

The appeal of M. Dez, for a chapel in Paris, deserves our most earnest attention. The room in which he and his friends worship is inconveniently situated in a back street, difficult of access, and is too small. Our readers will perhaps remember Mr. Spurgeon's graphic description of it in "A Sabbath in Paris." He says, "We gained from a Christian friend the information that the Baptists met somewhere near the Romish Church of St. Roch. By searching the Directory we found that there was a school-room in one of the streets near the church, and, rightly guessing that this would be the appointed spot, away we hastened. No board or placard gave us assistance. We entered a little yard, and followed a couple who were going upstairs. The upper room in Jerusalem flashed before our eyes. We mounted, saw a little notice on the door, entered, and found ourselves in the humble room. A brother at the other end was instructing a few lads; a few poor people were sitting upon chairs waiting for service. Meanwhile the congregation gathered, until about eighty or one hundred occupied the chairs. They were a company in which most classes were represented,—the well-attired French lady, the tradesman, soldier, and workman. To our great joy, we soon perceived that the working-class predominated. We think we saw in that stone-paved, whitewashed school-room, the battle-axe and weapons of war with which God shall do great exploits."

We ought to have in Paris a neat and commodious chapel, as much in the centre of the city as possible. This is evident, whether we regard the relation of the Paris church to the other Baptist churches in France, or consider the importance of having a suitable home for English Baptists during their stay in the French metropolis. Our brethren purpose, when their house is erected,—and we sincerely hope that may be before long,—appropriating one part of the day for an English service. The Episcopalians, the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Independents, all have their English service. It is high time the Baptists had theirs. Let us, then, heartily come to the help of our Paris brethren in their great undertaking. It is pleasant to see the names of some of our most liberal and earnest friends in the subscription list of M. Dez. May many more be added to it till the necessary sum is obtained; and when the contemplated structure is erected, may it prove, under God's blessing, a place of rest and refreshment to many a Christian far from his usual sanctuary, and the birthplace of many souls! And may the little leaven of Baptist doctrine in France spread itself throughout the entire nation till the whole is leavened!

Words of Wisdom for Christian People.

A MINISTER WANTED.

Thriftyville wants a minister. They are looking far and near to find one; but they want the "right man." Thriftyville is not one of your old, effete, worn-out places. It is a place grown up quickly on Rapid River, in the beautiful valley of Eureka. It is a very important place—standing directly over the centre of the earth, so that if a hole were dug, and a stone dropped into it, it would pass through the very centre of this great world. It has a growing population, and boasts of "a circle of *very* intelligent people." Moreover, it seems to be "the centre of a great moral influence," and it now wants a minister second to none. They want to get the society out of debt, to repair the old wastes which time has already made in their half-built sanctuary, to gather in the young, to "draw" a full house, and to make the concern every way prosperous and respectable, and easy to support.

Now for the qualifications desired. They are so few and simple, that "the right man" probably stands at your elbow.

Item. He must be a man mature in intellect, and ripe in experience;—and yet, so young that all the young people will rush after him.

Item. He must be quick, ardent, flashing, nervous in temperament, so that he may kindle quick and burn bright, prompt, ready, and wide-awake;—and yet, a man of the most consummate prudence, whose nerves shall never be unstrung, nor out of tune.

Item. He must be a man of great, burning zeal, so that he can startle, arouse, and kindle, and move the congregation;—and yet, so cautious, so cool, that he is always safe, calm, self-possessed, unperturbated.

Item. He must have the power to awaken and arouse the church;—and yet, must let them be quiet, and look on while he does all that is done for Christ.

Item. He must urge and move men, and lead the whole people to salvation, and get them all into the church;—and yet, so judicious that he can make a difference between the chaff and the wheat, and let none but real converts into the fold.

Item. He must be strong and original in the pulpit, and bring none but beaten oil there;—and yet, be at leisure to receive any call, any interruption, be prepared for every occasion, and like the town-pump, never sucking for water, or giving out dry.

Item. He must be a workman who shall go down deep into the mines of truth, and quarry out its pillars, and set them up, and make men come and wrestle around them;—and yet, the most gifted man in light conversation, and on all that floats in the every-day world around him.

Item. He must have health, so that his body never wearies, his nerves never quiver—a real specimen of muscular Christianity;—and yet, a hard, severe thinker, a close reasoner, and a most diligent student; getting his books from any quarter.

Item. He must be poor in this world's goods, to show that money is not his object, and so that he can sympathise with the poor, and so that he can't help feeling humble and dependent;—and yet, his family must be the most hospitable, and entertain more company than any other in town; his children must be second to none in education and training; they must be respectably dressed; he must give away more, and more cheerfully, than any man in the place, not even excepting Esquire Rich himself: and his family must all be models, in all respects, for the community.

Item. He must be a man who can be permanent—(though vastly superior to Dr. Solid, of the next town, who has been with his flock over thirty years!)—and his congregation must hear the same voice, on the same subject, several times every week;—and yet, he must come every time, as original, as fresh, as glowing, as if it were done but once a year.

Item. He must be able to live in a glass-house, always acting in public, coming in contact with all sorts of men and of prejudices, so original that all will respect and fear him;—and yet,

never odd, eccentric, morose, repulsive, or awing in manners. He should have the lofty attributes of an angel, with the sympathies, the gentleness and softness of the little child.

Item. He must be always ready, lofty, keyed-up to do the best possible;—and yet, so calm in spirit, and word, and look, that nothing can disturb the repose.

Item. He must never preach so that the people are not proud of him when they have a stranger in their pew, or so that the echo of his sermon shall not come back when he goes abroad;—and yet, every sermon must be so beautiful that all the young people will admire it, and wonder over it, and the little child can carry it all home, and repeat it to her grandmother.

Item. His wife must be the model of all models. She must be young and handsome, but not indiscreet or vain. She must be worthy of the admiration of all the people, and yet think she is the humblest of all. She must watch, and discipline, and prune, and lead, and make her husband the embodiment of all excellence, but she must never be aware of her power, lest she become overbearing. She must be the model of a lady, have a fair face and white hands, though compelled to do all the work of her family. She must be ready to meet everybody with a smile, take her hands from the flour at any moment, wear a checked apron, and still be dressed like a lady. Her face must never be otherwise than cheerful, her head must do its aching in secret, and she must give none occasion to call her extravagant, or to call her mean. She must be able to alter the same dress four times, turning it thrice, and fitting it to a smaller child each time. She will be expected to be the very life of the Dorcas Society, the most zealous member of the All-Labour Society, the very back-bone of the Maternal Association, the warm leader in the Female Prayer-meeting, the head and mover in the Reading Circle, and the visitor-general of the poor. She will be expected to be at all the prayer-meetings, and, let how many soever brethren be present, she will be looked to to set the tune for each hymn. As she receives no salary, of course her qualifications are not so important, *though the above are essential!*

Item. The minister must be sound in doctrine, able to lay his hands on the naked foundations of truth, to fortify and defend the hill of Zion;—and yet, must never preach the old fashioned doctrines. They are not spicy. They are not taking. They will never "draw" a full house.

Item. It is rather *desirable* that he should be a pious man, and one who loves his Master;—and yet, as this article, *piety*, has not acquired great value in Thriftyville, it would be well for him not to make that too obtrusive.

. . . . . .

Such, in few words, is the man they want for Thriftyville. If they can light on him they will pay him *One Hundred Pounds* annually, and not let it run behind unreasonably. This is not, to be sure, half what their clerks receive; but they think that the minister, if he be only the "right" man, can "manage" to live on it. Who is ready? N.B. All applicants must put an extra postage stamp in the letter, or it will receive no attention.—*The Rev. John Todd, D.D.*

Narratives, Anecdotes, &c.

THE POWER OF A BURNT BIBLE.

"I AM going the round of my district," said Miss Lawton, "to look after the wants of my people, and particularly to inquire whether they are well supplied with Bibles."

At the mention of Bibles Tom scowled, and Jane turned pale, for she knew how her husband disliked them, and, indeed, he would not allow one to be in the house.

No one spoke, so Miss Lawton said again, "How are you supplied with Bibles in your house, Mrs. Evans?"

Jane was just faltering out an answer, when her husband relieved her by saying gruffly at once, "We haven't no

Bible in our house; and I don't mean to have one, either."

"No Bible at all!" answered Miss Lawton. "Well, I am sorry to hear this; because I think no house can be really happy without the reading of God's Book. But why is it that you have an objection to the Bible, Mr. Evans? I never heard of its doing any one harm, and I am sure it has done a great many people much good."

"I say what I say," answered Tom. "I haven't a Bible in my house, and don't mean to have one."

"Perhaps," said Miss Lawton, "you don't like to spend money upon one. Now, I will tell you what, Mr. Evans, I don't want you to spend a penny upon what you don't like, but I will make you a present of one. There," said she, putting upon the table a nice little roan Bible, "I will leave this with you; you will take it as a present from me, will you not?"

"Leave it or not, as you please, ma'am," answered Tom; "I have said there shall not be a Bible in my house, and there shan't, either."

"Well, but surely you'll let me leave it?"

"Oh yes, leave it if you choose; but mark you, you see that fire. As sure as you cross the threshold of my door, that book goes into the fire. I'm a man of my word, and I'll do it."

"Mr. Evans," said Miss Lawton, looking calmly at him, while his wife trembled with emotion, "I *will* leave the book; and you may do with it what you like; but may God yet use that despised book for the salvation of your soul!" And she offered up a silent prayer that He, in whose hand is all power, might have mercy upon the poor infidel, and use his own Word as his instrument.

Miss Lawton rose up and took her leave. She crossed the threshold, and closed the door. Tom Evans immediately moved to the table and seized the Bible. "There," said he, holding it out at arm's-length, "I'm a man of my word; this book shall *not* stay in my house to trouble me," and he flung it on the top of the fire.

A column of smoke then rose from the volume; then the flames caught it, and it blazed with a bright glare up the chimney. Jane went out of the room, silently weeping, to a neighbour's cottage. As she opened the door, a gust of wind rushed in, and fanned about the burning leaves. The infidel stood over the fire till all appeared to be consumed, and then sat down to his work.

The short day was soon over, and evening stole on. Tom left his work, and desired his wife to light the candle; then they sat over the fire together.

"I fancy," he said to his wife, "that ere district lady, as she calls herself, didn't expect I would keep my word about that book. But I'm a man of my word, and I hate the book, and that's the fittest place for it," pointing to the blackened leaves underneath the grate. "The fire has done its work well; but there's a bit here which hasn't been touched," and he took up a small piece which had been blown to one side, and so had escaped entire destruction. It was brown, and scarcely told what it had been, but the print seemed to have been burnt out into bolder relief by the action of the fire.

"I did say that I would not read the book, but I will just see what the fire has left." He took it in his hand, and, holding it up to the candle, read these words: "*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my Word shall not pass away.*"

These words were not read by Tom Evans without effect. The Spirit of God worked by them. He could not lose remembrance of them. He rested not till he found the Saviour and peace to his soul. The lady's prayer was answered. God was true to his promise, "My Word shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish the thing whereunto I sent it."

THE VISITATION SERMON.

Some forty years have elapsed since a curious circumstance occurred at Norwich, in connection with the Rev. Joseph Kinghorn, of that city, the well-known opponent of Robert Hall on Terms of Communion. The facts will afford amusement to our readers, and will show the clergy that if they ever choose to preach another man's sermon, it is important to read it beforehand, at least while there is yet time to procure another. It is a fact well-known, that many of the Episcopalian clergy of England, even some of those

who are reputed as evangelical, purchase their sermons in manuscript; and that not a few of them are written by Dissenting ministers. It happened that, at the period we have already indicated, a visitation was about to be held by the bishop, and a certain reverend of the city, probably because he was a sprig of nobility, was appointed to preach the sermon. His reverence, utterly unable to compose a suitable discourse, applied to different persons famed for pulpit eloquence to assist him, but met with a series of disappointments. At length some one recommended an application to Mr. Kinghorn. He heard the request of his neighbour, and knew precisely what was wanted; but unfortunately his engagements were so numerous that he could not possibly write the sermon till the evening before the day when it was to be delivered. This was no difficulty whatever to the clergyman, who, indeed, did not call for it till he was on his way to deliver it. On receiving it from Mr. Kinghorn, with the assurance that it was "the best sermon he could write for the occasion," and having handed over "the fee," about one pound, he proceeded to the crowded church. A few minutes before entering the pulpit, after being fully robed in the vestry, and having also put on his "Master's scarf," he took out his sermon case to see whether the manuscript was fairly and boldly written. This being "all right," his eye first caught the text, which was scarcely satisfactory; but at this moment, the rector and beadle came to conduct him to the pulpit, where, in a few moments, he read as the foundation of his discourse, Isaiah xliv. 10, 11,—"His watchmen are blind; they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber, yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand; they all look to their own way, every one for gain from his quarter." The sermon was, as the reader has already anticipated, a severe philippic on the imbecility and vices of the clergy. The preacher had wit enough to see that all was wrong, but he had no other sermon provided, and had not sense sufficient to alter the one before him. The commotion in the church during its delivery was terrific; the bishop frowned, the clergy bit their lips with chagrin, and the congregation fairly laughed outright. The service at length closed, and the bishop angrily asked the preacher why he had given them such a sermon. The answer was at least true. "Indeed, my lord, I am very sorry; but I assure your lordship I did not write the sermon, and did not know what was in it till your lordship heard it." "Who wrote it for you?" "Why, my lord, it was written by Mr. Kinghorn, a very eloquent Baptist minister of the city, from whom I had it this morning." His lordship now saw that he was talking to a most incorrigible dolt, and dismissed him with the wise counsel, that if he ever again was called to preach on a public occasion, he would do well to compose his own sermon.

SAVED BY A GRANDFATHER'S PRAYER.

Five years ago the village of N. was visited with a powerful work of grace. Christians were greatly revived, and many sinners were led to Jesus. Among the most interesting of the latter, was one who had long been a constant attendant upon the means of grace, and was now deeply wrought upon by the Spirit. Having found peace in believing, he arose one evening in meeting, and, in touching language, gave account of his early religious impressions, his recent deep impression that he was now having *his last call*, and of his final submission of every power of soul and body to Christ. It was a moment of solemn stillness. Every heart was moved, every eye was filled with tears, and all felt that God was there and had performed a most wonderful work.

At the close of the meeting one said, "*That was in answer to his grandfather's prayer!*" and added, "How joyful would he have been had he heard that experience to-night! Possibly his sainted spirit may have been hovering over us; possibly he is now rejoicing with the angels of God over this returning prodigal!"

On inquiry I learned this interesting fact in regard to the man's history. On the day of his birth his aged grandfather offered a prayer at the family altar for the health and life, and especially for the *salvation*, of the child,

and so fervent and importunate was it, that one who heard it remarked, "*That prayer will surely be answered.*" Years had passed. The grandfather had died. The babe had grown to be a man; and, though during his childhood and youth he had frequently been the subject of deep religious impressions, these had passed away. So that prayer had seemingly been offered in vain. But not so to the pious mother's faith; not so, doubtless, to that grandfather's sainted vision; and not so to God, who had not forgotten the supplication and tears offered in that child's behalf. Prayer was now answered after so long a time, and so signally that none could doubt it.

Let this example be an encouragement to pious parents. Pray for your children and persevere in prayer, though the answer be delayed. The prayer of faith will not be in vain. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." And should the eye of any unconverted parent rest on this sketch, let him seriously reflect on the necessity of prayer both to himself and to those committed to his charge.

"Happy the home where prayer is heard,
And praise is wont to rise,
Where parents love the sacred word,
And live but for the skies."

THE BIBLE IN THE BARN.

A SOLDIER'S WIFE, with her three children, was passing through Essex on her way to Chelmsford. It was a fine summer's evening, when she saw a young man standing at a farmyard gate; she asked him if his master would allow her and her children to sleep in his barn; he said he thought he would, and went and asked; the farmer gave his consent, and told the young man to unbind two trusses of straw for them to sleep upon. The woman asked him where she could get a little water, and he went to fetch her some, and brought her a small can of milk, for which she was very thankful. She then took some bread from her bundle, but before she began to eat she asked God to bless what she and her children were about to partake of, though it was only dry bread and milk. The youth felt interested, and sitting down near the barn door, watched them at their humble meal. After finishing their repast, the soldier's wife took from her bundle a New Testament, and said to the young man, "We are going to read and pray before we go to rest; if you will join us I shall be pleased." He did so; and after reading a few verses from the gospel by Luke, she earnestly prayed for the blessing of the Lord to rest upon the farmer, his family, his servants, and the young man, for the kindness she had received from them. The simplicity of the prayer struck the young man, and the words sunk deep into his heart. He could not sleep; he rose early in the morning, and went to the barn to ask the soldier's wife the way of salvation, but she was gone. He told one of the servant girls what had passed, and she related it to her young mistress, who was pleased to relate the simple tale to the rest of the family. It led the whole of them to reflect; they looked for the verses read by the soldier's wife the previous night. They sent for the young man to have the tale confirmed, who wept as he told the simple story, and closed by saying, "Salvation has come to my heart. I feel as I have never done before." The farmer, his family, and the young man became constant hearers of the Gospel, and a great change was evident in their subsequent lives and conduct.

THE GOOD DEACON.

JOHN COTMAN, of London, was a respectable mechanic and the deacon of a Congregational church. Both he and his wife were eminent for simple piety, fervent devotion, and quiet, untiring zeal. They had very small talents, but much religion. In their family boarded a young man, also a mechanic, of foreign birth, but pursuing his calling in London. He knew nothing of religion, but was amiable and obliging, and greatly devoted to pleasure as the source of his happiness.

For some time after he began to live with them, when the Bible, morning and evening, was laid on the table, indicative of family worship, it was a signal for his leaving the room; but after a short time, influenced by the amiable spirit and manners of the worthy John Cotman and his wife, he occasionally stayed to observe this solemnity. One evening, he came home to dress, that he might visit a place of

amusement; when the good deacon said,—

"I think you had better go with me, and enjoy pleasure greater than that which you are going to."

"Where are you going?" was the inquiry of the young man.

"To the prayer-meeting at our church," replied the deacon.

"A prayer-meeting; what is that?"

"Why, we meet to sing hymns, read the Scriptures, and ask God to bless us."

The young man hesitated.

"You had much better go," said the good old lady, in her usual kind tone.

"So I will," was the reply.

He went, and in that meeting of some dozen persons, held in the vestry of the Congregational church, Maize Hill, Greenwich, did God open and soften his heart, and excited feelings which led him to the Saviour of sinners for pardon. That young man's name was JOHN GERHARD ONCKEN.

A Page for the Young.

LITTLE ROBERT THE TRAPPER.

COAL, you know, my reader, is dug out of the earth. Should you like to visit a coal-mine? We come to a great hole in the ground, and jump into a big basket hung by stout chains to a windlass. Down, down we go. It grows blacker and blacker, and is pitch dark by the time we touch the bottom. Here passage-ways run off in every direction, often crossing each other like the streets of a town. On each side of these are caves, where the coal is dug out. Thick pillars are left between to hold up the roof. The men who hew out the coal are called *hewers*. The coal is put into tubs running on wooden wheels, and dragged to the mouth of the pit. Those who do this are called *putters*. It is hard work pulling these heavy loads through the long, low, dark passages. Besides these are the *trappers*, whose business is to sit scooped up in little black holes, to open and shut the trap-doors which lead out of the passages. This is boys' work. Often little boys of nine or ten are employed. It is not hard, but very dismal and tiresome. And to stay all day long! How should you like it, children, who go to school and play out in the grass and sunshine?

Then, you know, there are dangers down in the mine which do not happen to folks above it. Foul air sometimes chokes the men to death; water sometimes spouts up and drowns them; and sometimes a part of a mine caves in. This is called a *crush*.

One morning, while the pitmen were at work in a mine in the north of England, they heard a noise louder than the loudest thunder. In a moment every lamp was out, for the men work by lamps; there is not a spark of daylight there. "A crush! a crush!" cry the men; and men and boys throw down their tools and run.

It was Tuesday morning. The men gather at the mouth of the pit and count their number. Five are missing —two hewers, two putters, and one little trapper, Robert Lester. People above hear the noise, and rush to the pit's mouth. The workmen are taken up. Oh, the agony of the wives and mothers of those who are left behind! Brave men go back to their rescue. They light their candles and reach the crush. There is nothing but a heap of ruins. Were the poor fellows instantly killed, or are they hemmed in to die of starvation? It is a dreadful thought. They called and shouted, but no answer. Up go pickaxes and shovels to clear the way. It is great labour and great risk. The news of the accident brings help from far and near. Men flock from all quarters to offer their services. How they work! Towards night they hear something. Stop! hark! listen! It is not a voice, but a tapping. It can just be heard! *Clink, clink, clink, clink, clink!* five times, and then it stopped. Five more, and then a stop. What does it mean? One man guessed. There were five missing, and the five clinks showed all five were alive waiting for deliverance. A shout of joy went up in and above the pit.

Among the foremost was the father of little Robert the trapper. Night and day he never left the mine, and hardly quitted work. "You'll kill yourself, Lester," said a fellow-workman; "go take a little rest, and trust the work to us." "No, no, Tom," cried the poor father; "I promised Robert's mother we'd come up together; and so we will, if it please God," he said, wiping the tears from his rough cheek; and he hewed away with all his might.

How does it fare with the poor prisoners? They were frightened, like the rest, by that sudden and awful noise. Little Robert left his door and ran to the men, who well knew what it meant. Waiting till everything was quiet, they went forward to examine the passage-way Robert left. It was blocked up. They tried another; that was blocked up. Oh, fearful thought, they were *buried alive!* The men went back to the boy. "I want to go home; please, do let me go home," said little Robert. "Yes, yes, as soon as we find a way out, my little man," said Truman, in a kind yet husky voice. The air grew close and suffocating, and they took their oil-cans and food-bags to one of the galleries where it was better.

The two hewers, Truman and Logan, were pious men. "Well, James, what shall we do next?" asked Truman. "There is but one thing we can do," said Logan. "God says, 'Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.'" They told the boys their danger. "But we must keep up a good heart," said these believing men; "and the way to do so is to put our trust in the Almighty God more than in man. He heard Jonah cry to him from the whale's belly, and he can hear us from the bottom of a coal-pit. Let us pray to him." They all knelt down. Poor little Robert cried bitterly. But as the pious pitmen prayed, first one and then the other, their hearts grew lighter, and even the little trapper dried his tears.

When it was time for dinner they ate sparingly, in order to make the food they had last at least three days, for it might be full that time before they could be dug out. Meanwhile, what should they do for *water?* A trickling noise was heard. Water, water! Yes, it was water dripping from the rock. "It seems," said Logan, "as if this water was sent on purpose to put us in mind that God won't forsake us; for don't you know the good book says, 'When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them'?"

Pretty soon the men got their pick-axes; but what a hopeless task it seemed to cut through the terrible mass of earth and stones to daylight. Their hearts beat with hope and joy when they first heard the sound of their friends working on the other side. It was then they made the *clink, clink,* with their pickaxes, which was heard, and so encouraged their deliverers.

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and no rescue. What dark and dreadful days! Worse than all, the sounds beyond did not appear to draw nearer. And yet prayer and *songs of praise* might have been heard in that dismal cavern. By Friday morning their food was gone, and by Friday night their oil gave out. "Our food is gone, our light is gone, but our God is not gone," said Truman. "He says, I will never leave you, nor forsake you. Can you trust him still, mate?" "Yes, I can," said his pious comrade. "Let us try and sing that blessed hymn,

"'The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
He'll never, no, never, no, never forsake.'"

They tried to sing it, but their strength gave out long before they got through. As for little Robert, he was so weak he could not sit up. His mind wandered; he talked about the sun and the grass as if he saw them; and once he broke out, repeating what he learned at Sunday school:

"Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dressed in living green."

Saturday came. Five days, and the men outside knew there was not an instant to lose. They were too anxious even to speak. It was only work, work, for dear life. For hours they had heard no signals. Were their poor comrades *dead?* Suddenly the wall was pierced; a hole was made through; feeble voices were heard. "*Truman, are you there?*" "Yes, all here." "*All living?*" "Yes, thank God, all living." "Yes, thank God, all living." "All living, all living!" shouted the men; and the shout went up to the top of the pit. When Robert's father heard his

little son was alive, the good news was too much for him, and he fell down senseless.

One hour more, and the rescuers reached their comrades. Who can describe the meeting? I can't, or the joy and gratitude of wives, mothers, and friends, as one and another were brought up to light. Then came Mr. Lester with Robert in his arms. What a huzza rent the air as they hove in sight! Safe, safe! God be praised!

Our Sunday Schools.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER'S PRAYER.

NINETEEN years ago, in one of the principal streets of lower New York, where at present scarce anything else is heard but the din and bustle of commerce, stood a little church. Connected with it was a flourishing Sunday school; and Sabbath after Sabbath might be seen the little children, neatly attired, and with their Bibles in their hands, pursuing their way to this place of divine instruction.

In one corner of the school-room sat a faithful teacher. Sabbath after Sabbath, through rain and sunshine, punctual and regular, he might be seen at his post, surrounded by his little flock. But though so faithful in attendance and instruction, he perceived no fruit of his labours, and began to feel sad and discouraged. "Why would not the Lord bless him? He had been faithful. Why could he not have one of those infant souls so eagerly sought for the Saviour? Was God untrue to his promise? Had Jesus Christ ceased to love the little child?"

It was thus the teacher reasoned with himself, as one day he slowly paced his way homeward from that Sabbath school. He retired to his room, and sitting down alone, again thought of his infant souls, and how he might awaken them to a sense of their peril and a Saviour's love. His instruction, he thought, had perhaps been too general; he had not pressed the Gospel truth individually enough upon the minds of his dear children. True, he had spoken to them of their souls' salvation and the love of Christ, but it had been only in a general way; and being taken in a general way, it seemed to produce little or no effect. "I have not," said he, "perhaps been sufficiently pointed in my remonstrances and entreaties with them to come to Christ."

Thinking thus within himself, he determined henceforth to make his instructions more direct and personal to the minds of his little flock. In that teacher's class was a little boy, whose attendance was almost as regular as that of his instructor. He loved his teacher, and his teacher loved him, and he never met him but the face of little Theodore became radiant with delight.

Now, in this determination to individualize his instruction, the teacher had selected that little boy as the one with whom he should first commence his new method. He thought within himself, "How can I best accomplish it? It would hardly do to make him the principal subject and point of instruction and remark before the whole class, and yet the time would hardly allow for such instruction to every other member. If he could see little Theodore alone, during the week, he might perhaps more effectually succeed in impressing his youthful mind, and so, in turn, the minds of the other children."

On the following Sabbath, therefore, after the completion of the lesson, he turned to the little boy, who always sat at his right, and told him to call at his room, on such an afternoon of the week. Theodore retired to his home, thinking all the way what it could be the teacher wanted of him. "Perhaps he has some little present to give me—some little memorial of his friendship and love."

Wednesday afternoon came round, and at the appointed hour was heard the rap at the door. He entered, and found his teacher sitting all alone in one corner of the room, serious and

thoughtful. The little boy laid down his hat, and seated himself by his side.

"Theodore," said the teacher, "do you know why I have asked you here this afternoon? I want to speak to you on a very solemn and important subject, and that subject is your soul's salvation."

The little boy's heart was moved, as his teacher proceeded to tell him of a Saviour's love (and yet it was nothing more or less than had been reiterated to him Sabbath after Sabbath); and still more moved and melted to tears, as side by side he knelt with that teacher before the throne of grace. Oh, with what earnestness did he there plead for the soul of his little scholar! It pierced the boy's heart. It fell like seed imperishable into broken soil.

Years passed on. That teacher and scholar had been separated, perhaps for ever. That little boy had grown up to manhood. He was still unregenerate and worldly. Oh, where was that teacher's prayer? Had it been poured out for naught? Had that private remonstrance been of no avail? Ah, no! It had sent a thrill through that little child's heart which was enduring. It had touched a chord which continued to vibrate long after all other of that teacher's remarks and instructions had been forgotten. It had penetrated deep into his soul, and there it lay imperishable—engraven as with a pen of iron. That earnest, supplicating voice still resounded in the dark chambers of his heart. The earnest, agonizing look of that praying teacher's countenance seemed interwoven in the very texture of his soul.

There as a sentinel it stood, amid the encroachments of temptation, and amid the follies and delinquencies of youth, gently remonstrating and chiding by its presence. How often, when about to yield to sin, had the thought of that prayer suddenly risen up, as a spirit of the past, to restrain him from the intended evil!

But that was not all. That prayer produced its impression not only on earth;—it had impressed the throne of God. From the lone corner of that Sabbath school teacher's chamber, it had penetrated heaven, and before God's mercy-seat it lay, as yet unanswered, but not forgotten, by the God of grace. In time he sent his Spirit to work upon that young man's heart. Heavy and dark were the struggles in that soul, as grace fought for the mastery there. But successful it could not but be, and successful it was; for the prayer of faith had been offered for that soul, and we know that "the prayer of faith availeth much."

Nineteen long years have sped away since scholar and teacher bent together before the mercy-seat. The teacher's name has long since been forgotten. The countenances of those classmates, of the superintendent, and minister, of that Sunday school and church, have long since faded from the memory of the past, and sunk into deep oblivion. But that last prayer will never—can never be forgotten. Like an oasis, it stands forth amid the desert of youthful folly and sin, a beacon light on the dark shore of the past—a monument upon which is inscribed, "*A Sabbath School Teacher's faithfulness and love.*"

Sabbath school instructor! Do you wish for success in your labours? Do you seek to sow imperishable seeds of truth, and create enduring impressions upon the youthful minds of your little flock? Let your instructions, and warnings, and entreaties, to the members of your little class, be more personal and direct. The common method of instruction is not enough. It is too general. Each one applies it to the other—no one to himself. Endeavour to individualize your instructions and remarks. Heat and light, concentrated, are tenfold more powerful than diffused. And if God sees not fit immediately to reward your efforts, be not discouraged. You may be sowing seed which, after you are dead and gone—after your name and countenance have long since been forgotten upon earth—may spring up a glorious harvest to your Redeemer's praise.

Our Societies.

THE ANNUAL MEETINGS.

This is the age of religious and benevolent Societies. We have before us a list of public anniversaries to be held this season in London, extending from the middle of April to the middle of July. The institutions represented at these annual gatherings embrace every form of Christian and philanthropic effort, and cover with their operations all lands. In spite of all their defects, they are the glory of our time.

We purpose giving, in the present paper, a brief but comprehensive sketch of the anniversaries held this year in connection with our own denomination. They commenced on the evening of Wednesday, April the 20th, when two meetings were convened—the annual meeting of the Baptist Building Fund—and the Jubilee meeting of the Baptist Irish Society.

The Baptist Building Fund is one of the most useful of our institutions, and deserves a much larger measure of support than has ever yet been rendered it. Last year it advanced in loans, to be repaid in annual instalments of ten per cent. free of interest, no less a sum than £2,200. The total capital of the Fund is £10,600; but the Committee have boldly determined to raise it, if possible, during the next five years, to £100,000. May the Baptists of this country come to the help of the Committee, in seeking to accomplish so noble an object! The annual meeting was held in the Library of the Mission House, and was presided over by the Rev. C. M. Birrell, of Liverpool. After prayer by the Rev. T. C. Page, of Plymouth; the Secretary, Mr. A. T. Bowser, read the report; and Mr. J. Benham the Treasurer's account. The meeting was then addressed by the Chairman; Drs. Underhill and Angus; and Messrs. Walters, of Newcastle; Burchell, of Blackpool; Millard, of Huntingdon; Woollacott, and Bowser, sen.

The Jubilee meeting of the Baptist Irish Society was held at Upton Chapel, Lambeth. This is a new place of worship built for the church and congregation worshipping for many years in Church Street Chapel, Blackfriars. There was a counter-attraction in the same locality, in the opening services of Mr. Howieson's new chapel, in Walworth Road. Therefore, though it was the Jubilee of the Society, though Mr. Spurgeon was announced as Chairman, and though Mr. Stovel and Mr. Brown, of Liverpool, were among the speakers, the attendance was yet small. After devotional services, the meeting was opened by the Chairman in an able speech; from which we cannot forbear making two extracts—one having reference to State-Churchism—the other to Plymouth Brethrenism. Speaking of the State-Church in Ireland, Mr. Spurgeon said:—

"Then there is the State-Church. A State-Church anywhere I should look upon as a nuisance. If it were perfect in other respects, yet as a State-Church we must always look upon it as an obstacle to the Gospel. But the State-Church in Ireland is a crying abomination. It is an infinitesimal minority, and Irishmen need never look abroad for some object of popular outcry and grievance while they have the Church like an abscess feeding upon them. I honour and respect many brethren in the Irish Church; some of them are most faithful ministers of God—but the Church as a Church I abhor. What right has it to abstract its substance from Romanists—to live and fatten upon what is nothing better than plunder taken from those who do not believe what it teaches? The Popish mind is not very discriminating, it looks upon all Protestants as alike, and the Irishman says, 'Here I have your Protestantism rammed down my throat, and though I never go to the heretical schism-shop I am obliged to maintain it. A pretty religion yours, which cannot support itself, but has to take my 'praties' to support your priest! I won't believe in you. You are a set of thieves, and it is not likely that we should thrive when you, though not thieves in one sense, yet subsist upon the thievish principle, which is living on the support of people who don't believe in you."

We fancy the Plymouth Brethren will not have much love for this faithful brother, when they read the following testimony. After speaking of Romanism, State-Churchism, and the Regium Donum of the Presbyterians, as evils, and hindrances to the spread of the truth in Ireland, Mr. Spurgeon said:—

"Perhaps Plymouth Brethrenism is as bad as all these put together. Wherever our churches have been established there are always Plymouth Brethren who have come out from the Established Church or from Presbyterianism. They agree with us to a great extent, but they are sure, as soon as ever the Church has risen to a state of something like stability, to create a schism amongst us. Of all the sects, they are the most sectarian; of all Christians, the most unchristian in their spirit; of all separatists,

they are the most separated from others: and yet of all men I will say personally they are the best of men. I am on terms of personal intimacy with very many among the Plymouth Brethren, and I respect them as men, but whenever they enter into our churches they cause divisions, for their spirit is division. Without a minister the churches never grow and never will grow. I believe the ministry is God's agency, and where that is despised we shall never see the power of God's Spirit poured forth to any great extent. But these people will not hear ministers, and consequently, though the services may be profitable to a few believers, they never will be attractive to the outside world. I would prefer above all things to spend my Sabbaths with Christian people, in breaking bread and prayer. It would just suit my flesh. It is just what my carnality pants for, for I can tell you I do not always find it easy to go into the pulpit and face the mass of people. I have a considerable lazy bump in my head, and should be glad to have the opportunity of sitting still sometimes. But a church will not last without a minister; it would soon go to pieces. These friends have a perfect right to secede from us and hold their own views and principles, but inasmuch as they have always amalgamated with our churches, and then seceded, causing heartburnings and bitterness and I know not what, I can but look upon them as hindrances to the spread of the Gospel. I would ten times rather have to contend with the error and bitterness and darkness of Romanism, because I know then what I have to contend with, than with the sectarianism of those who pretend to be so evangelical as not to bear any name so Christless as 'denomination,' and who are yet more denominational than the most bigoted, and more sectarian than sectarianism ever was at its worst."

These are forcible and right words. The Rev. C. J. Middleditch, the Secretary of the Society, stated that during the past year 188 persons had been added to Christian fellowship in connection with the churches in Ireland—that 16 ministerial brethren were employed at 17 principal stations—that the number of church-members was about 1,000, and the number of stated hearers about 5,000. Addresses were subsequently delivered by Messrs. Gray, Stovel, Stock, and Evans, minister of the chapel. By an unwise arrangement the Rev. H. S. Brown was appointed to speak at the close of the meeting; but, as the time had been occupied by the previous speakers, he very properly declined speaking at all. Through this mistake the assembly lost a good speech, and the Society some words of powerful advocacy and support.

At the prayer-meeting of the Baptist Foreign Missionary Society, which was held at the Mission House on the following morning, there was a large attendance. The Rev. Dr. Steane presided, and delivered a most appropriate address. Several brethren led the devotions of the worshippers; and it was felt to be a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

In the evening we went to Kingsgate Chapel, Holborn, to attend the twenty-fourth anniversary of the Bible Translation Society. It was encouraging to see a much larger gathering than at previous anniversaries. The chair was occupied by J. C. Marshman, Esq., and the speakers announced were all missionaries,—men who, from personal experience and observation, could testify to the good resulting from the Society's operations. Two of the number, however, Mr. Evans, of Delhi, and Mr. Saker, were unable to speak through illness. After prayer by the Rev. G. Isaac, of Brighton, the Chairman introduced the business of the evening in his usual sensible and earnest way. From his long residence in India, and his intimate acquaintance with missionary work there, he spoke with authority; and this was his testimony:—

"I do not say it to the disparagement of any other society, but it is the Baptist missionaries who have circulated the Word of God throughout the Gangetic valley, peopled by 70,000,000 of inhabitants. Besides, it is the Bengalee translation of Yates, improved by Wenger, that is read in all the missionary schools, and by all the converts among the 40,000,000 of inhabitants of Bengal. It is the Hindee version that has been made by Mr. Parsons, the excellence of which is admitted by the missionaries of all denominations, that is now circulated amongst the 30,000,000 of Hindoos in the North-West Provinces. Coming down still further to the Bay of Bengal, you will find that the 70,000,000 of inhabitants on the one side have been entirely dependent upon the Baptist versions; and if you look across the Bay to the great empire of Burmah, you have before you 100,000 converts who look to the American Baptist missionaries for the oracles of Divine truth. Thus we are placed in a position which, in the language of the world, would be called a proud one; but in the language of Christianity, a position of great honour."

After the Secretary, the Rev. W. W. Evans, had read the report, the meeting was addressed by the Revs. C. Carter, of Ceylon; J. Parsons, of Meerut; G. H. Rouse, of Calcutta; and Dr. Underhill. The speech of the evening was that of Mr. Parsons. Mr. Carter and Mr. Rouse spoke well; but people do not expect from a missionary abstract reasonings, statements of principle, or logical defences; they look for a narrative of what he has seen and done, and of what God has done through him. Mr. Parsons hit the nail

on the head. A more interesting missionary speech was never delivered. A few more like it would soon make the anniversary of the Bible Translation Society one of the most attractive of our solemn feasts. The following extracts may induce our readers to look into *The Freeman* for the whole speech, if they have not already seen it:—

"I had been on one occasion circulating the Bible as far as the Sub-Himalayas, when a man said to me that he had a book like that which he saw in my hand, and that he read from it every morning at prayer-time. He brought it out, and I found it to be a copy of John's gospel. The man said it seemed to him very good; it spoke much about God, was spiritual, and he thought it a little mystical, and so had adopted it as a devotional reading-book. It is my conviction that at the present time there are not less than five thousand persons in and about Delhi who are reading the Scriptures daily—(cheers)—but who do not profess to be Christians—Mahomedans and Hindoos. I do not doubt that my brethren in India would say that this calculation is much below the mark. I have had the pleasure of distributing not only entire copies of the Scriptures, for at one time I carried on a system of lending out the gospels and tracts every week. Amongst those who received these were six noblemen, four of them related to the royal family of Delhi; and some short time before I left, one of these told me that he hoped by-and-by to meet me in heaven. I replied, 'I hope you will recollect that you must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ: otherwise you can rightly indulge no such expectation.' 'I know that, Sahib,' he answered; 'but I do believe, and I am encouraged when I read the account of Nicodemus. I feel it so difficult to avow myself a Christian, and I think God will pardon me if I remain a secret Christian in my own house.' I had seen this man often, and when he came to me on this occasion he seemed anxious and troubled. After he had spoken to me as I have said, he was much more cheerful, and added, 'I have long wanted to mention this to you, Sahib, but I never had the courage to do it before.' I believe there are many men in this state in Northern India at the present time."

Again:—

"I have also met with several native Christians and native preachers who were brought to a knowledge of the truth by reading the Bible only, apart from all other help. I believe there are multitudes who, when hidden things shall be revealed, will be seen to have been brought to God in this manner. In one of the places before referred to, I went with a man who possessed a copy of the New Testament, and he told me that he intended to keep it in order to be ready for a great occasion. Asking what that was, he said: 'I feel sure that before long Christianity must prevail universally, and I think I had better keep this book to be prepared for that time.' I have heard from natives remarks of this kind:—'These books of yours are very dangerous indeed. I have taken particular notice that all persons who persevere in reading them become Christians at some time or other, and, therefore, I am determined not to read them.' Another person, who had received a New Testament from me, said, 'This, Sahib, is an excellent book. I consider it the best in the world.' Another person remarked, 'It is a book of deep meaning, and its signification is of the most weighty kind.' Another said, 'This book contains enough in itself to show any one the way to paradise.' Another, 'I am determined that I will read no other book but this; it is sufficient for me.' Another, 'The truth in this book is as clear as the light.' Another, still more expressively, 'God's truth in this book sparkles like crystals.' Another, 'This book contains heavenly food for the mind.' And still another, 'I consider that person alone happy who every day walks in this book.'"

Dr. Underhill put the case between the Bible Translation Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society forcibly when he said,—

"The most gratifying information had of late been received, showing that a desire to study the Scriptures extensively prevailed amongst the young men of India. To meet the evident want of the people, a gentleman had suggested to the British and Foreign Bible Society that a copy of the New Testament should be given to every native schoolmaster in India, and of one of the gospels to every scholar capable of reading it. The Committee seemed pleased with the idea, but it could not be fully carried out without including in the distribution the versions of the Baptist missionaries. Thus the old difficulty had come up, and the Committee declined to solve it, saying they would refer the matter to their Calcutta auxiliary, which simply meant that nothing would be done. This refusal to circulate the Baptist versions, even where no others existed, was the more inexplicable, seeing that the Bible Society circulated at the present moment Romish versions, wherein Christ is dishonoured and the Virgin elevated into an object of worship, and which puts penance in the place of repentance. To say the least, the Baptist versions are not heretical in any such sense as these Romish versions are; and he asked whether this was not a vivid illustration of rejecting the gnat and swallowing the camel?"

On Friday morning, the annual business meeting of the Baptist Irish Society was held at Moorgate Street, Thomas Pewtress, Esq., the Treasurer, presiding. The most important matter discussed was the union of this Society with the Baptist Home Missionary Society. The following resolution, moved by Mr. Heaton, and seconded by the Rev. W. Walters, was,

after a free expression of opinion, adopted by a large majority:—

"That in the opinion of this meeting, a union between the Baptist Home Missionary Society and the Baptist Irish Society is both practicable and desirable, and the present is an appropriate time for effecting such a union; and that it be therefore an instruction to the Committee to be this day appointed, to take such measures as may be adapted to promote such a union on the most desirable basis, and to call a special general meeting of this Society for a decision of the question on the earliest possible day."

In the afternoon, the business meeting of the Home Missionary Society was held in the same place. The Rev. W. F. Burchell presided. The Rev. S. J. Davis announced that he had resigned the office of Secretary, which he had filled for twenty-five years; and a resolution of gratitude for all Mr. Davis's services, and esteem for his character, was unanimously adopted. Messrs. Heaton and Walters introduced the resolution which had been adopted in the morning at the meeting of the Irish Society, and, after a long discussion, it was again carried. We hope, therefore, that the amalgamation will soon take place, and that we shall have a strong Baptist British Mission. In the meantime, the Rev. S. Green has been invited to succeed Mr. Davis as Secretary.

At seven in the evening, the Rev. T. F. Newman, of Shortwood, preached the Jubilee Sermon of the Irish Society, in Kingsgate Chapel. The discourse was one of great excellence; but the congregation was meagre in the extreme.

On Sunday, the 24th, Sermons were preached in the various Baptist chapels of the metropolis and its vicinity, and collections made on behalf of the Baptist Missionary Society.

Monday, the 25th, was a red-letter day in the history of the Baptist Union. On that day was held the most interesting and important session of its existence. The correspondence which had been carried on for some time past in the columns of *The Freeman*, together with the announcement that grave questions would be introduced for discussion, had excited, on the part of those interested in the proceedings, great expectations. The expectations of the most sanguine must have been more than realized. There was a numerous company; the Mission Library being quite full. It was matter of regret, however, that nearly the whole of the leading pastors and laymen of our London churches were absent,—a fact for which they ought to take to themselves shame, and a fact which appears in striking and sad contrast with the conduct of the ministers and members of other religious communities on similar occasions. The chair was filled by our esteemed and honoured brother, the Rev. J. P. Mursell, of Leicester,—a man of presence as well as a man of power. Our friend's head, if it had *only half* the quantity of brains it now holds, would be a fortune for any man. After devotional exercises, conducted by Dr. Hoby and Messrs. Stokes and Walters, the Chairman proceeded to deliver his opening address. Several subjects of great moment, affecting the religious interests of the day, were embraced in that address, and were discussed with the fulness and eloquence which mark all Mr. Mursell's productions. We have space for only two or three short extracts. This is Mr. Mursell's opinion of the *Essayists and Reviewers*:—

"Like all other innovators, these gentlemen give us nothing in return for that which they take away. Treading in the footsteps of their school, they follow the path of negative theology,—a course which, when once entered, it is not usual to forsake, and which opens out into wide but most dreary wastes. They quietly, moreover, ignore the thinkers and writers who have preceded them. Grotius, Lardner, Warburton, Whitby, Howe, Owen, with the galaxy to which they belong, are left in the oblivion which awaits all who reject the philosophy of a progressive Christianity, who believe that as a scheme of truth it is perfect, sufficient, and divine. Yet, strange to say, these enlightened instructors, who would be the guides of others, do not agree among themselves, but indicate varying attainments in their new researches, so that it is difficult to choose among them, or to decide at whose feet to sit. They agree only in removing the ancient landmarks, and indulging in conjectures of their own."

Adverting to the possibility of our cherishing too much sympathy with the æsthetic spirit of the times, our mentor thus set before us our danger and our duty:—

"Is it altogether certain that we may not adapt our religious houses and services to the cravings of novelty, until we appeal through them to the imagination rather than to the understanding, and render them channels of agreeable excitement, rather than sanctifying means of grace? Is there no danger of the sword of the Spirit itself losing its edge while brandished amidst so much that is incidental and artistic? While giving all proper attention to the tastefulness and commodiousness of our places of worship, and to the order, impressiveness, and decorum of their sacred engagements, we will not forget, brethren, that we have nothing to do with an age when all was typical,—whether buildings or ceremonies or sacrifices, from the golden bell and the pomegranate that adorned the robe of the priest, to the Urim and Thummim which glistened

on his breast—from the altar before which Solomon stood, spreading forth his hands towards heaven, to the gorgeous temple itself, beneath whose vaulted roof he poured forth his sublime prayer;—but the rather we will bear in mind that, whether we convene in the lowly cottage or in the well-appointed sanctuary, we 'come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to the innumerable company of angels, to God the judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel.'"

Hearken to this trumpet-call to renewed loyalty to God's Word:—

"Though a scratch or a flyspeck here or there may slightly deface the productions of a Raphael or a Titian, the genius of the great masters will gleam through notwithstanding; and, after all its avowed enemies or false friends may do, the inspiration of the sacred Scriptures will shine through all, with matchless and unabated splendour; the faithful guide from heaven will still remain with us, 'fair as the moon, clear as the sun, majestic as an army with banners.' Let us, brethren, as aforetime, give its leaves broadcast to the winds; let us tell its simple story to the child, and propound its deep philosophy to the sage; let its beams penetrate the hovel, and give an unwonted radiance to the palace; let us commission it to every clime, and render it into every tongue; let us fearlessly invite towards it scrutiny and research, and confidently laugh at the pestilential breath of malignity and hate, for 'not one jot or tittle of my Word shall fail.' If it would not savour of arrogance or presumption, I would appeal to the denomination to which I belong to rise as one man, and, amidst the times which are passing around us, swear renewed allegiance at the shrine of inspired truth!"

Every Baptist throughout the land will endorse the following expression of loyalty to the queen, with its accompanying testimony against the connection between the Church and the State in these realms:—

"We, as a body, in conjunction with other sections of the Dissenting community, yield to none in loyalty to the queen, and in attachment to her dynasty, and shall not cease to offer our prayers at the throne of the heavenly grace for her prolonged happiness, and for the continuance of her line. We honour and obey her as the head of the civil authority of the empire. But we repudiate with renewed determination the connection which subsists between the Church and the State, and conscientiously believe it to be dishonouring to God and to be fraught with manifold and grievous mischiefs to men; so that its dissolution would conduce to the promotion of pure religion, and to the honour and progress of the commonwealth. The connection which subsists between cause and effect must be strangely disturbed, and the laws which imperceptibly determine the processes of decay have been mysteriously suspended, if recent events do not hasten this issue. It is contrary to the reports of all history, and utterly discordant with the experience of ages, that prolonged internal contentions should not unsettle and weaken the communities or institutions they disturb,—that contending policies and conflicting interests should not engender incongruities and consuming animosities, which are the forerunners of decay. Beside the fatal disease they feed and influence within, they inspire, by degrees, distaste and aversion from without, so that spectators stand prepared for their overthrow. The hour may be delayed, and the process be apparently slow, but the catastrophe is inevitable, and such as no human strategy can avert. In the meantime, it is for us to hold fast the liberties we have won, to use all peaceful means to sweep away the petty tyrannies that remain, to substitute equality for toleration in all that relates to conscience and to right; and while labouring in the vineyard of the Great Master with increasing solicitude and care, and wishing 'grace, mercy, and peace to all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours,' serenely to await the day, when, emancipated from all worldly policies, an unfettered Christianity shall summon the nations to liberty and life."

The address was listened to throughout with the deepest attention; many parts of it eliciting loud applause. The thanks of the meeting were given to Mr. Mursell, accompanied by a request that he would allow the address to be printed with the proceedings of the session. The same course was pursued with respect to all the subsequent papers. The Rev. J. H. Millard, the Secretary, then read the annual report, from which it appeared that during the past year "Seven Associations, comprising 160 churches not previously connected with the Union, had resolved on their adhesion. The Associations which already belonged to the Union had also received a clear increase of 28 churches. The entire addition of churches was 190, and the total number now constituting the Union was 1,279. Large, however, as this aggregate was, it was little more than half of the denomination. Returns had been obtained from 1,701 churches, 600 more than had ever reported before. They reported a total membership of 176,232 persons, or an average of 104 members to each church. The total number of Baptists in Great Britain, on that basis, might be estimated at 246,120. The churches belonging to the Associations had made returns as to membership, but the average increase during the year was only at the rate of 1¼ per church, the lowest average for eight years."

After the adoption of the report, the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel addressed the Union on the state of the churches. It is impossible to convey any adequate conception of the fervour and unction with which he appealed to the brethren. His words were like those of an apostle. There was never a finer illustration of the marvellous power of truth and goodness. No extract that we might give would do justice to the address. There was a charm in the speaker's appearance, in the tones of his voice, in the spirit of deep and solemn conviction with which he spoke, that cannot be seen or felt by those who merely read his words. We supply, however, the following, because it illustrates what may be done by thorough consecration to Christ:—

"I know that the churches lose members as well as gain others, and that that reduces the average. But what we want is to see men working, and of whom we can say that God works with them. You may have heard of that good man Carter, who has preached to working-men. It shows how he has got hold of their consciences, that there are two or three hundred working-men who have been led to Christ by his preaching. They had no baptistery, and they were Baptists from conviction. It was proposed to borrow the use of a chapel for the ceremony, but that was thought to be inconsistent. They had no money, but they had hands, and so they set to work and dug a baptistery in the room they had hired for their chapel; they laid on the pipes; and by the time the evening came the baptistery was ready, and fifty were baptized together. Mr. Carter has been living among them, a brother among brethren, and he is now their pastor. There is another instance of individual zeal, which I do not think we ought to ascribe altogether to the sovereignty of God. Mr. Barnie was a young boy in my Sunday school. He was a butcher's apprentice. He went to Australia, got a little money, came back and married his master's daughter, and has set up as a butcher at Notting Hill. He is an intelligent young man, and very earnest. He has a good business, but he has also been preaching Christ to his neighbours. A brother minister told me lately that this young man had brought ninety men to Christ, and that those persons had asked him to become their pastor, so that he is now carrying on his business as a butcher, and is also pastor of some two or three hundred working-people. He has a great deal of faith, and expects God to work every time he preaches. He does not pretend to know much, but he knows Christ has saved him, and he brings the truth before the consciences of men, and they fall down before the power of the Spirit. Now, if we have the same sort of faith, hope, and love, do not we believe the Lord will bless us?"

At the close of Mr. Noel's address the Rev. C. Williams, of Accrington, read the excellent paper on "Associations," which appears in our pages this month. A short discussion followed the paper, in the course of which the Rev. W. Robinson, of Cambridge, took occasion to say, that "it was his deep and deepening impression, as in the sight of the Master, that all denominationalism was sin." Mr. A. T. Bowser then read a very valuable paper on "Chapel-building Finance," which gave rise to considerable debate. The paper shewed that Mr. Bowser had thoroughly studied the subject; and suggested plans of action which, if carried out, cannot fail to be of great use.

The report of the Sub-Committee appointed to confer with the Committee of the National Aged Ministers' Society, on the subject of Ministerial Provident Societies, was then adopted. A draft reply to the fraternal letter received from the Baptist ministers in Philadelphia on the subject of their missionary jubilee was read; but after some discussion as to the proper way of wording that portion of it relating to slavery, it was referred to the committee to answer the letter. A resolution in favour of holding autumnal meetings in leading provincial towns was adopted. A petition to Parliament in favour of abolishing the present ecclesiastical tests for degrees and fellowships in the University of Oxford was also adopted and signed. A congratulatory resolution on the accession of so many churches and Associations to the ranks of the Union was passed. The Rev. C. Stovel read a characteristic paper on ecclesiastical relations with the civil government. A vote of thanks was then passed to the Chairman, and the proceedings were terminated in the usual manner.

Thus closed a session of the Baptist Union on which we reflect with devout gratitude; and which warrants us to expect great things in time to come. To the Secretary we offer our warmest congratulations.

In the evening the annual public meeting of the Baptist Home Missionary Society was held in the Poultry Chapel. There was a very respectable attendance. H. Wright, Esq., presided. After prayer by the Rev. J. H. Hinton, the Rev. S. Green, the newly-appointed Secretary, read the report, from which it appeared that four churches connected with the Society had become self-supporting during the past year. The meeting was afterwards addressed by the Chairman; and by Messrs. Walters, of Newcastle; Barnett, of Birmingham; Dennett, of Blackheath; Lance, of Newport; and Collings, of

Gloucester. Speaking of the progress of the Society in the north of England, Mr. Walters said:—

"There were two towns, he might mention, in the north of England, where they were endeavouring to do the thing that the Society indicated as necessary to be done. One was the town of West Hartlepool, one of the most thriving and flourishing ports on the eastern coast. That town was fast outrivalling Hull as a port for trade with the Baltic, and with the whole of northern Europe. The population was increasing at a very rapid rate, and they had, within the last year or two, established a church there. The friends received a small amount of aid from the Society; a large hall had been taken, but they were now negotiating for a piece of land on which to erect a suitable chapel, and then they would have to come to that Society to ask for more extended help for the minister, and they would have to come to the Baptist Building Society to ask for a loan towards the erection of a new chapel. The town of Middlesborough, also a port on the eastern coast, was another illustration of what he meant. Thirty years ago there was only one house there, but on the census of that town being taken a year ago for ecclesiastical purposes, the result showed a population of between 22,000 and 23,000 souls. All other denominations, excepting the Baptists, had a chapel there or a church; but their friends now had purchased a piece of ground in a most eligible part of the town, and the owners (Quakers) had most handsomely given back one-third of the purchase-money as their donation towards the erection of the edifice."

The next morning found us again at Moorgate Street. It was the annual members' meeting of the Baptist Foreign Missionary Society. Never did the friends of the Society muster in greater numbers. The floor of the library and the gallery were crowded to overflowing. In the absence of Sir S. M. Peto, M.P., the Treasurer of the institution, who was prevented from taking part in any of the meetings by illness, the Rev. J. H. Hinton was called to the chair. The usual routine business was attended to—notices of motion for effecting certain changes in the Society's constitution were given, to be considered at the next annual meeting—but the most interesting and encouraging part of the transactions was the announcement that the churches had given unmistakable proof of their continued confidence in the Society by their liberal response to the appeal which had been made during the year. As the result of the special efforts which had been put forth, not only had the financial year closed without debt, there was actually a balance in hand of £2700.

Bloomsbury Chapel was the place of attraction in the evening. The annual meeting of the Baptist Irish Society was to be held there; and Messrs. Aldis, Mursell, of Leicester, and Noel, were to be among the speakers. The chair was taken by H. Kelsall, Esq., of Rochdale. The report was read by the Secretary, and the meeting was subsequently addressed by Messrs. Aldis, Pattison, Tarbotton (Secretary of the Irish Evangelical Society), Mursell, Noel, Brock, and Gould, of Norwich. We have no room for extracts from any of these speeches, and must therefore content ourselves by saying that Mr. Aldis spoke with great power and beauty, and that the addresses of the other gentlemen were distinguished by various kinds and degrees of excellence.

The next day was full of engagements. At nine in the morning there was a meeting at the Mission House for the purpose of considering how the circulation of the *Baptist Magazine* might be increased. We were glad to hear that various improvements were intended; and shall be yet more glad to see them carried into effect. The denomination cannot well do without such an organ. May its future success be equal to its merits! At eleven, there was a large and respectable congregation at Bloomsbury Chapel, to hear the Rev. D. Katterns preach on behalf of the Baptist Missionary Society. The sermon was distinguished by all those excellences for which Mr. Katterns is, as a preacher, so justly esteemed. In the evening we went to Surrey Chapel to hear the Rev. A. M'Laren, of Manchester. The spacious house was crowded to excess by a respectable congregation, drawn from all parts of the metropolis, to hear this eloquent and far-famed preacher. After devotional services conducted by the Rev. W. Walters, Mr. M'Laren ascended the pulpit, and delivered the most powerful and impressive sermon we have ever heard. For nearly an hour and a half the immense audience was spell-bound. The originality of conception, the beautiful imagery, the fresh and sometimes delightfully quaint style, the intense earnestness with which the sermon was delivered, all contributed to the preacher's success. We quite agree with a friend whom we heard exclaim as we left the chapel, "That is the prince of preachers!" The same evening the twenty-third annual meeting of the Baptist Tract Society was held in Keppel Street Chapel, Russell Square. John Thwaites, Esq., presided. After the Chairman's speech and the reading of the report, the meeting was addressed by Messrs. Stock, Collins, of Grundisburgh, Dr. Eaton (President of the Madison

University, United States), Norton, Dickerson, Woodard, and Pells.

Thursday was the last day, and the great day of the feast. The seventy-second annual meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society was held in Exeter Hall. The large room was well filled, and the platform was crowded with the leading supporters of the Society, both of London and the provinces. Lord Radstock took the chair at eleven o'clock, and called on the Rev. Dr. Thomas (President of Pontypool College), to open the meeting with devotional exercises. An abstract of the report, as published in *The Missionary Herald*, was read by Dr. Underhill, and the Rev. F. Trestrail, in the absence, through illness, of Sir S. Morton Peto, Bart., M.P., read the balance-sheet, from which it appeared that the total income for the year was £34,419 4*s.* 2*d.*, which included special donations to meet the debt of last year and the apprehended deficiency this year, amounting to £5,934 7*s.* 7*d.* The General Purposes Fund had also increased by £5,284 11*s.* 2*d.* Thus both the real and prospective debt had been fully met, and there remained £2,723 15*s.* 6*d.* in the Treasurer's hands. But Sir Morton Peto wished the meeting very distinctly to understand that when current bills had been met there would remain a balance of only £40. The friends of the Mission must not, therefore, in the least degree, relax their efforts, but combine more earnestly than ever to strengthen and extend the operations of the Society. The noble Chairman then delivered a speech full of the finest Christian sentiment and feeling. The first resolution was moved by the Rev. T. Evans (from Delhi), who delivered one of the most elaborate and powerful missionary speeches that ever was heard in Exeter Hall. The difficulties and encouragements of missionary life in India were exhibited in a most striking manner; the audience listened with great delight, and Mr. Evans fairly established himself, before he sat down, as a successful platform orator. He was followed in a neat speech by the Rev. S. Coley, who represented the Wesleyan Connexion. After him came Dr. Angus, with a loving, sensible, able address. Then Mr. Spurgeon spoke with great ability, advocating some views of missionary organization which he deems important. Just as the meeting was about to close with the doxology, some person at the back of the platform caused a disturbance by endeavouring to speak, and as he persisted in his effort to be heard, the Rev. W. Brock said: "The person who has caused this interruption is a dismissed missionary of this Society. We have gone into the whole matter that he desires to bring before you, and have pronounced against him. He has received from our hands the full discharge of his claim upon us, and we hold his receipt, and yet he has actually had the impertinence to demand his salary up to the present time, and hold us bound to pay him. Furthermore, he has sent a letter to one of our Secretaries, claiming £1,000 for damage to his reputation, and a second letter to the other Secretary, claiming from him by return £10,000 as compensation. (Laughter.) This is not the man to get the ear of an Exeter Hall audience. He has gone further, and has declared that 'as for Frederick Trestrail, he would not believe a word he might say—not even take his oath on any matter.' (Cries of 'Shame,' and 'Turn him out.') Now, we would. (Loud cheers.) Furthermore, he has written of one of the brethren who was to have been here to-day, but could not because of illness, 'as that worthless scoundrel, Saker.' (Loud cries of 'Shame.') And of the directors of the Society he dares to assert that 'they are a set of impostors, and that lying and slander have been their weapons.' ('Shame.') That is my case in moving a distinct and definite resolution that this man be not heard. (Loud cheers.) A man who can first calumniate your Secretary, then go further and defame one of the best missionaries we have ever had, and further consummate his rancour by traducing the whole body of your directors, is not the man to be heard by you even for a single moment. (Loud cheers.) I beg, therefore, to move that Mr. Alexander Innes be not heard." The Rev. C. Stovel, in seconding the resolution, said: "I beg to state that Mr. Innes himself supplied the facts on which his further services were declined." The resolution was then put to the meeting, and carried unanimously. A cordial vote of thanks to Lord Radstock for presiding, moved by the Rev. F. Trestrail, and seconded by H. Kelsall, Esq., of Rochdale, having been passed, the doxology was sung, the benediction pronounced, and the meeting separated.

In the evening there were two gatherings—the annual meeting of the Young Men's Missionary Association, and that of the Baptist Evangelical Society. The first of these was held in the Metropolitan Tabernacle—John Eastty, Esq., in the chair. Mr. Tresidder read the report, and Dr. Edmond (Presbyterian), Mr. Landels, Dr. Hoole, and Mr. Jenner addressed the assembly. The second was held in Little Alie Street Chapel, under

the presidency of the Rev. P. Dickerson. Messrs. Frith, Howe, Wassell, Stock, Pells, and Woodard advocated the Society's claims.

Thus ended the Baptist Anniversaries of 1864. May all our Societies enjoy, during the year on which we have entered, a double portion of the divine blessing; so that if their friends and supporters are permitted to assemble in 1865, they may be able to rejoice together over richer results than at any past time!

Intelligence.

FOREIGN.

BAPTISTS IN SWEDEN.—The *German Baptist Reporter* gives the following interesting account of the progress of the Baptist churches in Sweden during the past year:—"To the praise of the Lord we can say that the past year has been marked by an increase of vitality and zeal in our churches in Sweden, and by the spread of the truth into many new districts. The church at Stockholm during the year increased largely in the number of its members. A 'Young Men's Society' has been formed, also a similar society among the female members of the church: both having as their aim the promotion of Christian holiness in the church. The church at Stora Mellosa, now numbering between 200 and 300 members, will soon have completed the fifth year of its existence without having ever been under the necessity of excluding a single member. A spirit of love reigns among the members, both towards each other and towards the Christians in the Lutheran Church, although the clergyman is a staunch opponent of the Baptists. Scarcely a Sabbath passes without some soul being converted to Christ, and the truth with respect to baptism also spreads rapidly. Without influence from without, simply by searching the Scriptures for themselves, the converts almost without exception become candidates for Scriptural baptism. Once in the year all the poor people in the parish (this year more than 300) are invited to a plentiful dinner, and in the afternoon the Gospel is preached to them. All the members of the church take part in the Sunday school: for those who are not required as teachers form themselves into classes for the study of the Scriptures. The churches in Askersund, Orebro, and Asker, have also enjoyed much blessing this year: in the former especially through the evangelistic labours of a very simple but earnest man named Malm, under whose preaching many have been awakened and converted to God. Great blessing attends the services in the new chapel at Gothenburg, and the church has been doubled in numbers during the past year. In Warberg Brother Truve has been privileged to lift up the standard of the Cross. At first he found much difficulty in obtaining a room for a meeting, but was allowed to speak of Christ to some poor people in the workhouse; this he considered a great concession, and his faith was strengthened, so that he prayed more earnestly for further help. The next day a large dancing saloon was offered to him, in which for fourteen days he preached regularly; the people came in crowds to the services, and the public-houses were left empty. At his next visit, in December, he found the former services had not been without good results; he now preached daily for a month in the dancing saloon, and one day the burgomaster came in and threatened to turn the preacher out of the town. But the consequence of this was that the next evening such a crowd came to the meeting that not more than half could get into the room, and on this same evening the Lord gave such power to his word that the room was filled with sounds of sighing and weeping. One solitary brother who had long prayed for his fellow-townsmen, was so filled with surprise and joy that for days he could scarcely eat or drink; he has since been much engaged in conversing with those who are awakened from the sleep of sin and are seeking Christ. Brother Backmann, whose labours in Northern Sweden have been greatly blessed, writes from Söderhamn:—'In the village of Land I was joyfully welcomed by thirty persons who had been converted through my feeble instrumentality last year. At S—— also, I had the joy of finding that some had been brought to a knowledge of the truth during my visit last spring. At —— I preached in the house of a poor widow, whose daughter had been confined to her bed three years, and is now blind. Last time I was there I spoke to and prayed with her; now I found her re-

joicing in Christ with exceeding joy. In Dalecarlia, where so much harm has during the last two years been done by the prevalence of the doctrine of sinless perfection, the views are now becoming more Scriptural; there is now a great desire for the "sincere milk of the word," and the Holy Spirit witnesses to his own truth. In the benighted provinces of Södermanland, Westmanland, and Ostergotland, in Central Sweden, our colporteurs report that many new doors are opening for the preaching of the Gospel, and many souls are converted to God. All our associations support colporteurs to visit the churches, and for the spread of the Gospel. The Norrland Association supports three; the Stockholm, Nerike, Gotland, Smoland, and Skane Associations, each two. The "Missionary Union," at Stockholm, has supported eleven during the past year; and three others are supported by individual Christians. In several churches there are also brethren who labour gratuitously on the Lord's days in preaching his word, and also spend as much other time as they can spare in spreading the knowledge of his name. The school, held by Brother Palmquist, in the winter months, for the better instruction of the colporteurs, has been of very great use. The circulation of tracts and Christian books during the year has been very large, and resulted in much blessing. Twenty-two of our churches have now chapels of their own. The church at Stockholm has bought a plot of ground in an excellent situation, and hopes soon to begin to build a chapel to seat 1,000 persons. For this they want additional funds; and the pastor, Mr. Wiberg, is now in America, where his wife's relatives reside, collecting with good success for this object. Persecution has not yet entirely ceased; but *this year in every case which has been represented to his Majesty the King, the sentence has been remitted.* This, however, cannot be done till the case has passed successively through all the lower and higher courts of appeal; and *the costs incurred*, which of course are very considerable, *have in no case been remitted.* A petition for full religious liberty, signed by 4,116 Baptists, has been presented to his royal Majesty, but met with a flat refusal, declaring that the liberty offered by the new law of religious liberty, enacted 1860, was enough. This law prohibits Dissenters from holding religious services anywhere but in their own chapels or graveyards, teaching schools for any children but their own, or receiving members under eighteen years of age, and excludes Dissenters from all civil offices, &c. The petition has been printed as a fly-leaf, and circulated with one of the first of our Swedish newspapers, and will, we hope, do much to remove the prejudices felt by many of our leading men against the Baptists, although at present it has not proved successful."

DOMESTIC.

WALWORTH ROAD, LONDON.—In consequence of the expiry of the lease of the chapel in Lion Street, New Kent Road, the Baptist church worshipping there, under the pastoral care of the Rev. W. Howieson, have been compelled to seek another place, and so long since as 1855 a fund was commenced among the church and members of the congregation for the purpose of erecting another place of worship. It was felt by those interested that it was desirable in the selection of a new site that the chapel should be situate in an open road if possible, and the site selected was in the Walworth Road, on the estate belonging to the Fishmongers' Company. The foundation-stone was laid on the 3rd of June last by Sir Samuel Morton Peto. The new chapel is a commodious structure, and the designers and those who have had the management of the building operations, have hit upon the happy medium, it not being distinguished by any superfluous ornamentation, while, on the other hand, it is not in any way characterised by meanness. Accommodation has been made for 850, and in addition there are seats at the back for the children belonging to the school. The closing services in the old chapel were held on Sunday, April 17th, when the Rev. S. Green, the former pastor, preached in the morning, and the Rev. W. Howieson, the present one, in the evening. The new chapel was opened by a series of services, commencing on Tuesday, April 19th, and terminating on the following Friday. The first service in the new chapel was a devotional meeting, commenced at half-past eight on the Tuesday morning, and presided over by the pastor. At twelve o'clock at noon the same day, Divine service was performed, the sermon being preached by the Rev. Francis Tucker, B.A., of Camden Road Chapel. The friends adjourned after the sermon to the Clayton school-room, York Street, to partake of a cold collation. W. M'Arthur, Esq., presided at this gathering, and Mr. J. E. Tresidder, secretary to the building committee, Mr. J. Burgess, Mr. W. H. Watson, Mr. G. Bayley, and other friends, addressed the assembly. A large number of friends then partook of tea in the chapel at Lion Street, after

which a sermon was preached in the new chapel in the evening, by the Rev. J. P. Chown, of Bradford. On the Wednesday evening a public meeting was held, which, in the absence of Sir Morton Peto through illness, was presided over by W. H. Watson, Esq. Mr. J. E. Tresidder, the honorary secretary, read an interesting account of the progress of the effort which had led to the building of the new chapel. The Revs. R. Robinson, H. S. Brown, S. G. Green, B.A., C. Vince, N. Haycroft, M.A., C. H. Spurgeon, and P. J. Turquand, also delivered addresses. On the Thursday evening, the Rev. J. Stoughton, of Kensington, preached; and on the Friday evening a communion service, presided over by the Rev. Dr. Steane, was held, when above five hundred members of Christian churches were present. We are glad to add that through the Christian liberality of the friends, the whole cost of the erection, amounting to £3,900, has been entirely defrayed.

Bromsgrove. — On Monday evening, May 9th, an important public meeting was held in the Baptist chapel here. For some time past a congregational committee has been at work devising the best means for accommodating the increasing numbers who regularly frequent the chapel, and the children who attend the Sunday schools, the present means having been for some time past inadequate. The friends who form the committee invited the members of the church and congregation to meet them at tea, that they might lay before them the plans they had adopted, and obtain their support and co-operation in carrying them out. A goodly number responded. The Rev. Charles Vince, of Birmingham, occupied the chair. Mr. John H. Scroxton gave an interesting *résumé* of the history of the church, extending over two eventful centuries, the period which the records still preserved treat of, showing that besides giving to the world many ministers of the Gospel, the honour of baptizing the members who formed Cannon Street, the mother church of Birmingham, belonged to Bromsgrove. It was stated by the chairman further, that to the strict views inculcated at Bromsgrove, was due the formation of Carr's Lane church about the same time. Mr. S. Yates, deacon of the church, and secretary of the building committee, whose statement was supplemented by the minister, showed the present position of the church, congregation, and schools. A year ago, the congregation was a very poor one; many of the members were alienated and indifferent; from twenty to thirty only attending the monthly observance of the Lord's Supper. Since then the congregation has increased greatly, filling to overflowing the chapel and aisles, and on many occasions persons have retired from the over-crowding and heat. The church has doubled its membership during the last seven months. In October, last year, the number was seventy-one,—they have now increased to 147. The schools during the year have increased from 136 to 250. The imperative necessity for providing more ample space having become apparent, it has been decided to build a new chapel and to convert the present one into schools. One capable of accommodating 700 persons has been designed by Mr. Bidlake, of Wolverhampton, and approved of by the committee. Though substantial, it is in a simple and unpretending style, suitable for the plain people who shall use it, and will cost from £1,500 to £1,800. Towards this sum, the friends present promised £750, and in addition, a gentleman who had already given £100, promised another £100, if five others gave £20 each, and ten others £10 each. The Rev. R. Tuck, B.A. (Independent), Mr. Wilmot, of Birmingham (who kindly gave £50), and the chairman, warmly advocated the course recommended by the committee, and as the majority of the members of the church are nailers, and not very rich—though they give up to, and even beyond their ability —the burden of this work falls on a few families who have given so freely themselves that they can with confidence appeal for help to friends elsewhere.

Stretford, Manchester.—On Wednesday evening, May 4th, a meeting was held in the Town Hall, to welcome the Rev. Fitzherbert Bugby, as pastor of the new Union Church. About 300 persons sat down to tea at six o'clock: a number which would have been much larger but for a thunderstorm which broke over Manchester at that hour. After devotional exercises, conducted by the Rev. W. F. Burchell, John Ryland, Esq., of Longford Hall, took the chair, and expressed his pleasure in the attempt that was being made in Stretford to show how possible it was for Independents and Baptists to unite together in one congregation, and his confidence in the successful result under the pastorship of the Rev. F. Bugby. Mr. Reuben Spencer stated the way in which the movement originated, and the steps taken to secure the services of Mr. Bugby, and then read an address of welcome on behalf of the congregation. Mr. Bugby, in responding, thanked the friends for their kind expressions, and intimated the fervent hope that the desire of all might be more than realised. He was prepared to minister, according to his ability, to their highest interests, and soli-

cited the prayerful assistance and co-operation of the friends who were gathered around him. His remarks were listened to with deep attention, and he resumed his seat amidst loud applause. The chairman then called upon the following gentlemen in order:—The Revs. A. M'Laren, B.A., of Manchester; G. W. Clapham, of Preston; W. F. Burchell, of Blackpool; and A. Mursell, of Manchester; all of whom referred to their long and intimate friendship with the newly-elected pastor, and their gratification at the selection the people had made, some dwelling at considerable length on the union of Baptists and Independents, the rapidly-increasing population around them, the necessity there was for enlarged religious efforts in Stretford, and the need of a deeper-toned piety in the church. All the speakers were most cordially received by the assembly. Letters were read from the Rev. H. S. Brown, of Liverpool, and the Rev. D. Hay (Wesleyan), of Manchester, formerly of Preston, deeply regretting their unavoidable absence. Votes of thanks were passed to the ministers, and to Mr. M'Laren in particular, for his advice and assistance in the earlier stages of the movement, and for having introduced Mr. Bugby to them; also to the chairman, and to Mrs. Ryland, for the beautiful flowers which decorated the room. The doxology and the benediction closed a very delightful meeting.

South Molton, Devon.—An interesting meeting was held on Tuesday, May 17th, in connection with the Baptist friends at South Molton, Devon. The object of it was to raise a fund for the purpose of building a house as a residence for the minister. A piece of freehold land adjoining the chapel was purchased some years ago, and is properly placed in trust for the object stated. The ground, as well as the chapel and school-rooms, are entirely free from debt. The church and congregation, however, have, from various causes, been reduced to a very low state, and consequently are quite unable to support a minister, or to raise funds for the house. About three years since, Mr. Saunders, of Brixham, having resigned his pastorate there, came to reside in this town; then, at the urgent request of the church, seconded by the late venerable Mr. Winter, of Bristol, and some other minister, Mr. Saunders was induced to occupy the pulpit (till some other and better arrangement might be made); this he has continued to do up to the present time. But feeling, from his age and its concomitants, that he cannot long go on with his present labours, he felt anxious to attempt something for the permanent benefit of the Baptist cause in the town; hence the project of the house. On Whit-Sunday, May 15th, the Rev. J. Teall, of Woolwich (formerly minister at South Molton), preached morning and evening, when the subject was brought before the people, and also at a tea-meeting on the Tuesday evening following, when addresses were delivered by the Revs. Messrs. Teall, J. R. Wood, of Barnstaple, M. Saunders, J. Darracott, Esq., of Appledore, and Mr. Blackwell. The Rev. W. Cutcliffe, of Brayford, and Andrew, of South Molton (Independent), took part in the services. The meetings were numerously attended, and much kindliness of feeling was manifested. Collections were made on the occasion; a subscription has been entered into; and it is hoped that in the course of the next twelve months, a sufficient amount may be raised to justify a contract for the building, which it is thought may be concluded for £200.

Louth, Lincolnshire.—The church and congregation gathered under the ministry of the late Rev. J. Kiddall, and which has hitherto worshipped in a rented chapel in Walker Gate, opened their new and very comfortable place of worship on Thursday, April 21st. The Rev. W. Brock, of London, preached a most effective sermon in the morning from Matt. xxvi. 7. The afternoon service was conducted by the Rev. R. Ingham, of the Vale, near Todmorden, who preached in his usually earnest and impressive manner from Acts xx. 24. A choice selection of articles was offered for sale in the school-room after the morning service, the sale of which was resumed at noon on the Friday, and continued during the evening. A very elegant collation was served in the school-room. The chair was taken by Mr. W. Newman, and short addresses were delivered by the Rev. W. Brock and the pastor of the church. The public tea was numerously attended, probably about 400 persons being present. The evening meeting was presided over by John Crossley, Esq., of Halifax. The meeting was addressed by the chairman, by the Revs. W. Herbert, W. Orton, R. Ingham, H. Richardson, W. T. Symons, G. Shaw, J. Taylor, and by Mr. W. Newman. The collections during the day amounted to £147. This amount was increased to £215 by a donation of £50 from the chairman, and £20 from a Wesleyan friend from Bacup. The neat and comfortable chapel, and spacious school-room and class-rooms, have cost, including the land, about £1,700, and have been built from plans and specifications made by the minister. The opening services were continued